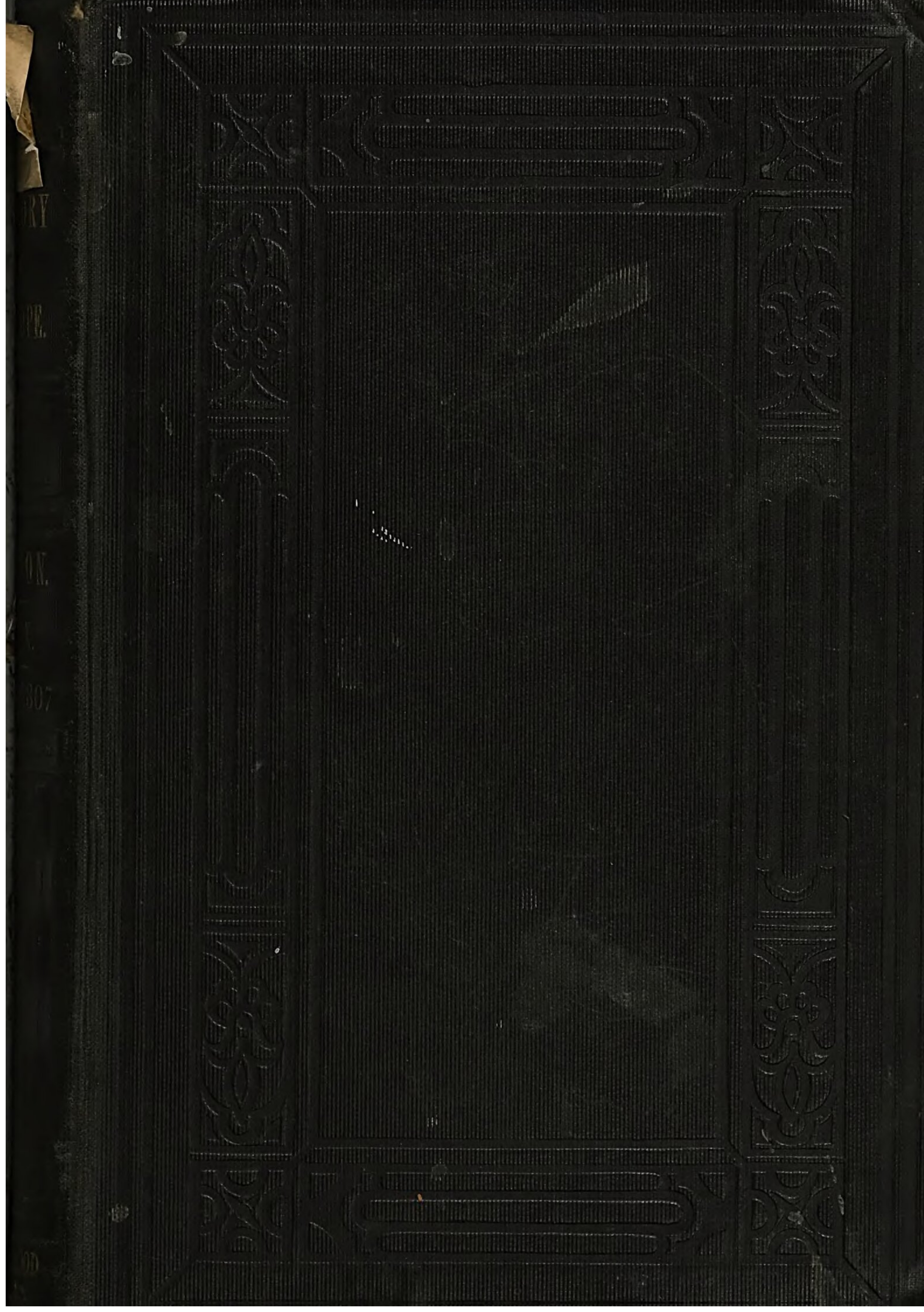




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C. J. Gordon with
Rear Admiral Gordon
best regards

2nd Nov^r 1850

HISTORY OF EUROPE

DURING

THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.

C. J. Gordon with
Rear Admiral Gordon
best regards

2nd Nov^r 1850

HISTORY OF EUROPE

DURING

THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.

“BELLUM maxime omnium memorabile, quæ unquam gesta sint, me scripturum ; quod, Hannibale duce, Carthaginienses cum populo Romano gessere. Nam neque validiores opibus ullæ inter se civitates gentesque contulerunt arma, neque his ipsis tantum unquam virium aut roboris fuit : et haud ignotas belli artes inter se, sed expertas primo Punico conserebant bello ; odiis etiam prope majoribus certarunt, quam viribus ; et adeo varia belli fortuna ancepsque Mars fuit, ut propius periculum fuerint, qui vicerunt.”—Liv. lib. 21.

HISTORY OF EUROPE

FROM THE

COMMENCEMENT OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

IN M.DCC.LXXXIX.

TO THE RESTORATION OF THE BOURBONS

IN M.DCCC.XV.

BY ARCHIBALD ALISON, F.R.S.

ADVOCATE.

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CHAPTER XLIII.

CAMPAIGN OF JENA—FALL OF PRUSSIA.

No monarchy in Europe is less indebted than the Prussian, for its political power and importance, to the advantages of nature. Its territory, flat, sandy, and in great part sterile, can only be brought to a high state of cultivation by long-continued efforts, and the unsparing application of human industry. Its sea-coast has few advantageous harbours: its rivers, though numerous, and in general navigable, descend for the greater part of their course through the territories of separate or rival states. Without the natural fertility of the Sarmatian plains, or the mineral wealth of the Bohemian mountains; destitute alike of the flocks of Hungary or the herds of Switzerland; enjoying neither the forests of Norway nor the vines of France—it depends entirely on grain crops and pastures, and for them the bounty of nature has afforded no peculiar advantages. Vast tracts of gloomy heath, or blowing sand, hardly less unproductive, cover a large part of its surface; in other places, cheerless, desolate plains, thickly strewn with rushes or stunted firs, convey a monotonous, mournful impression to the mind of the traveller.¹—Yet have the industry and perseverance of man conquered all

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1.
Natural disadvantages
of Prussia.

¹ Tchoborski, i. 115, 117. Personal observation.

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these disadvantages: the arid sands have been covered with waving crops, the rushy fields with rich pastures; and in no country in Europe is agriculture now advancing with more vigorous strides, or population increasing with such steady rapidity.*

2.
Political situation and inhabitants of Prussia.

If Prussia owes little to her natural advantages, she is indebted still less to the political facilities of her situation, or the homogeneity in character of her inhabitants. Her territory, which has gradually been enlarged by the talents or good fortune of her rulers, is widely scattered from the Rhine to the Vistula, with other states in some places intervening, and in general in such long shreds, as equally exposes her to attack, and deprives her of the advantages of a compact formation for defence. Her inhabitants are composed of different races, speaking in some places different languages, and but recently actuated in any by a common bond of national attachment. The old electorate of Brandenburg originally formed part of the vast monarchy of Poland, and broke off from that unwieldy commonwealth during the weakness of its unbridled democracy; Silesia, conquered by the Great Frederick in the middle of the 18th century, is a province of Bohemia, and is chiefly inhabited by the Slavonian tribes; while Prussian Poland was the fruit of the iniquitous spoliation of that unhappy state in 1772 and 1794, and its inhabitants retain all the mournful recollections and national traditions by which the Sarmatian race is characterised in every part of the world. Yet does the Prussian monarchy now form a united and prosperous whole: its rise during the last century has been rapid beyond example; it singly defeated, under the Great Frederick, a coalition of the three most powerful monarchies in Europe; and it yields to no country in the world in patriotic spirit, and the glorious

* Prussia contains at present—

Arable lands,	.	47,295,716 arpents.
Vineyards,	.	1,024,176 ..
Meadows,	.	14,326,429 ..
Pastures,	.	16,972,714 ..
Forests,	.	23,800,000 ..
Wastes, lakes, &c.,	.	8,986,347 ..

112,405,382 arpents; or nearly 111,000

square English geographical miles.

21,490 arpents make a square German geographical mile.—See TCHOBORSKI, i. 115; and FORSTER and WEBER, *Statistiques de la Prusse*, 17, 21.

efforts which it has since made to maintain its independence.

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3.
Population
and extent of
Prussia.

Augmented as it has been by the acquisitions made at the treaty of Paris in 1814, the Prussian monarchy now contains upwards of fifteen millions of inhabitants, who are diffused over a territory embracing 13,936 square marine leagues, or 111,488 square English miles: a surface little less than that of Great Britain and Ireland, which contain 122,000. At the commencement of the war of 1806, however, both were much less considerable: the former only amounting to 9,500,000 souls, the latter to 72,000 square miles of territory. If this considerable population was placed on a compact and defensible territory, it would form a great and powerful monarchy, having nearly the resources, in population and territory, of the British empire in Europe at the commencement of the Revolutionary war; but both population and territory are so scattered over a long and narrow extent of level surface, that they seem at first sight to be a source rather of weakness than strength. They extend from the banks of the Niemen to those of the Sarre, over a space three hundred leagues, or above eight hundred miles, in length; while the greatest breadth does not exceed a hundred and thirty leagues, and their average is not above forty. These straggling territories are in many places interrupted by the possessions of foreign princes, enclosed within those of Prussia, which, on the other hand, has no inconsiderable portion of its dependencies imbedded in the dominions of other states. Thus the Prussian dominions present an irregular strip stretching along the whole north of Germany, having its back to the Baltic Sea or German Ocean, the harbours of which are liable to be blockaded by the superior fleets of Britain; while its long front is exposed to the incursions of Austria, and its two extremities lie open, with no natural frontier capable of defence, and but few artificial strongholds, to the incursions of the great monarchies of France and Russia—the former possessing above twice, the latter nearly four times, its military resources.¹

¹ Malte Brun, v. 294, 295.

The urban population of Prussia bears a remarkably large proportion to the rural; for the former amounts to a fourth of the whole inhabitants. The number of towns and burghs is 1012, of which thirty-seven contain above

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4.
Towns and
manufactur-
ing industry
of Prussia.

10,000 inhabitants.* This great number and size of towns indicates either extraordinary riches in the adjacent territory, as in Lombardy and Flanders, or considerable manufacturing advantages, such as those which have raised the cities to such a stupendous magnitude in the north of England and the west of Scotland. Such, accordingly, is the case; and the manufacturing industry of Prussia, in spite of the prohibitory system adopted generally by the continental states, is very considerable. Inferior of course, by more than a half, in proportion to the square league of territory, to that of Britain, it is considerably superior to that of France.† The iron-works and manufactories of zinc and copper, as well as the salt-works, in its dominions, are very extensive; and the cotton manufactures, though recently established, are making, under the shelter of the heavy protective duties established against those of England, rapid progress. The total amount of its exports in 1828 was 24,102,000 thalers, or nearly £4,000,000, and four thousand merchant vessels bore the flag of Frederick William.¹

¹ Malte
Brun, v. 291,
292.

The main strength of Prussia, however, lies in its agriculture; and it is in the patriotic spirit and undaunted courage of the class engaged in it, that the monarchy in

		Pop. in 1834.			Pop. in 1834.
* Viz.—	Berlin,	258,000	Trêves,		16,000
	Breslau,	88,000	Stralsund,		16,000
	Cologne,	71,000	Halberstadt,		15,000
	Königsberg,	70,000	Brandenburg,		15,000
	Torgau,	70,000	Nussie,		13,000
	Dantzic,	65,000	Glogau,		12,500
	Magdeburg,	42,000	Bonn,		12,500
	Aix-la-Chapelle,	37,000	Quedlinburg,		12,500
	Stettin,	36,000	Gorlitz,		12,000
	Elberfeldt,	29,000	Brieg,		12,000
	Dusseldorf,	28,000	Leignitz,		11,500
	Coblentz,	26,000	Gruneberg,		11,900
	Posen,	25,000	Schweidnitz,		11,000
	Halle,	25,000	Minden,		11,000
	Potsdam,	24,000	Mulhausen,		10,500
	Erfurth,	22,000	Prentzlow,		10,000
	Munich,	20,000	Ascherleben,		10,000
	Frankfort-on-Oder,	18,000	Naumberg,		10,000
	Crefeldt,	17,000			

—MALTE BRUN, v. 297, 303.

† Horse power of machines in proportion to the square league of territory:

In Great Britain, 415 horses.

In Prussia, . . . 183 ..

In France, . . . 178 ..

In proportion to her extent of surface, Prussia has fewer steam-engines than France; but more hydraulic machines, and, on the whole, a greater amount of mechanical power.—*Vide* EGEN, *Untersuchungen über den Effekt einiger im Rheinland, Westphalen, Veste henden Wasserwerke*. Berlin, 1831;—and MALTE BRUN, v. 291.

every age has found the surest bulwark against foreign aggression. So rapid has been the increase of sheep of late years in Prussia, that their number, which in 1816 amounted only to 8,261,400 heads, had risen in 1825 to 14,156,000; that is, nearly doubled; and the most decisive proof of the general increase of rural produce is to be found in the fact, that though population in Prussia is now advancing more rapidly than any in Europe, and so as to double, if the present progress should continue, in twenty-six years, yet no importation of foreign grain is required. Subsistence, under the influence of increased production, so far from becoming scarce, is constantly declining in price, and the augmented comforts and wants of a prosperous people are amply provided for by the labours of the agricultural portion of the community.¹

It was by slow degrees, however, and by the successive efforts of more than one generation of great men, that Prussia was raised to its present prosperous condition. The monarchy, in fact, dated from the accession of Frederick the Great; but during the short period which had since elapsed, it had made unexampled progress. The treasure, indeed, amassed by that great warrior and able prince, had been wholly dissipated during the succeeding reign, but both under his sway and that of his successor Frederick William, the monarchy had made important advances in territory, wealth, and population. By withdrawing from the alliance against France in 1794, the cabinet of Berlin succeeded in appropriating to itself a large portion of the spoils of Poland; while the open preference to French interests which they evinced for the ten years which followed the treaty of Bâle, was rewarded by a considerable share of the indemnities; in other words, of the spoils of the ecclesiastical princes of the empire;² and a most important increase of influence, by the place assigned to Prussia as the protector of the neutral leagues situated beyond a fixed line in the north of Germany.

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5.

Rapid agricultural progress of Prussia.

¹ Malte Brun, v. 289, 305. Dupin, Force Commerciale de France, i. 36.

6.

Slow progress of Prussia at first, and rapid subsequent growth.

² Hard. v. and vi. 379, 247, 249. Bign. ii. 291, 292.

* In 1828, the total population of the Prussian provinces, exclusive of the Canton of Neuchâtel, was 12,672,000 inhabitants. In 1832, it was 13,843,000; and it is now (1843) upwards of 15,000,000. The proportion per square league in the first period, was 892; in the second, 993: a prodigious difference to have taken place in so short a period as four years.—MALTE BRUN, v. 276.

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During this long period of pacification, the industry and population of the country rapidly increased ; a large portion of the commerce of Germany had fallen into its hands, and the whirl and expenditure of war, so desolating to other states, was felt only as increasing the demand for agricultural produce, or augmenting the profits of neutral navigation.

7.
Statistical
details.

At the death of the Great Frederick in 1786, the population of the monarchy was 7,000,000 of souls, and its revenue 31,000,000 thalers, or about £4,600,000 sterling. By the shares obtained of Poland on occasion of its successive dismemberments, and the acquisition of Anspach, Bayreuth, and other districts, its population was raised to 9,000,000 ; and although the treasure of 70,000,000 thalers (£10,500,000) left by the Great Frederick had disappeared, and been converted into a debt of 28,000,000 of thalers, or £4,200,000, yet this was compensated by the increase of the revenue, which had risen to 36,000,000 thalers, or £5,400,000. Various establishments had been set on foot at Berlin, eminently calculated to promote the interests both of commerce and agriculture. In particular, a bank and society of commerce were established in that capital, and institutions formed in the provinces to lend money to the landed proprietors on reasonable terms. By the aid of these establishments, and the effect of long-continued peace and prosperity, the finances of the state were in the most flourishing condition in 1804 ; all the branches of the public service provided for by the current revenue, and even some progress made in the reduction of the debt. The large share of the German indemnities, obtained through French and Russian influence by this aspiring power, made a considerable addition to the public resources : the acquisition of 526,000 souls raised the population to 9,500,000 souls, and the increase of 2,375,000 thalers yearly revenue swelled the income of the public treasury to 38,375,000 thalers, or £5,750,000 sterling ; a sum equivalent, from the difference in the value of money, to at least ten millions sterling in Great Britain. This revenue, as in Austria, was the net receipt of the exchequer, and independent, not merely of the expenses of collection,¹ but of various local charges in the different

¹ Bign. ii.
293, 297.

provinces. The regular army was nearly 200,000 strong, brave, and highly disciplined, but not to be compared to the French, either in the experience and skill of the officers, or in the moral energy which had been developed by the events of the Revolution.

Unlimited toleration prevails in Prussia. The Protestant is the religion of the sovereign and of the state, but persons professing all creeds are equally eligible to all offices under government, and, practically speaking, no difference is made between them. On the whole, two-thirds of the inhabitants are Protestants, one-third Catholics; but the proportions between these two great divisions of Christians vary considerably in the different provinces.* Each religion has its separate ministers, and bishops. Berlin is every five years the seat of a general synod; that capital has a Protestant bishop, and Königsberg another; but the Catholics have two archbishops and six bishops in the Prussian dominions. Like the Austrian government, however, the Prussians are careful not to admit the slightest interference in matters not purely spiritual by the court of Rome, and Catholic ministers of vacant livings are appointed by a variety of lay patrons, as in Great Britain, without any serious collision with the Holy See.¹

The revenue of Prussia, like that of all other countries in Europe, is derived partly from direct, partly from indirect taxation. The total revenue is 79,810,000 florins, or nearly £8,000,000 sterling, a sum at least equal to £14,000,000 sterling in Great Britain, if the difference

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8.
State of religion in Prussia.

¹ Malte Brun, v. 282.

* The Prussian population was divided, according to its religion, in 1829, in the following manner:—

Provinces.	Protestants.	Catholics.	Mormon-ites.	Jews.	Totals, including Military.
Prussia,	1,448,113	529,921	13,919	19,408	2,008,361
Posen,	309,495	687,401	..	67,590	1,064,506
Pomerania,	864,588	7,543	..	4,709	876,842
Brandenberg,	1,505,471	20,535	245	10,341	1,539,592
Silesia,	1,284,448	1,091,132	..	20,970	2,396,551
Saxony,	1,316,700	89,081	..	3,607	1,409,388
Westphalia,	504,611	711,883	171	11,981	1,228,548
Rhenish Provinces,	499,840	71,678,45	1,315	22,421	2,202,322
	7,753,264	4,816,215	15,658	160,978	12,726,110

—MALTE BRUN, v. 304.

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9.
Revenue and
expenditure
of Prussia.

¹ Tchoborski, *Finances d'Autriche et de la Prusse*, i. 1, 10.
Malte Brun, v. 310, 285.

in the value of money is taken into consideration.* The expenditure is somewhat less, amounting only to 75,238,571 florins, or £7,523,857 sterling, leaving a balance of above 5,000,000 florins, or £500,000 yearly, to go to the discharge of the principal of the public debt.† The public debt of Prussia in 1833 amounted to 723,450,000 francs, or £29,000,000 sterling. In 1823 the debt was 908,950,000 francs, or £36,350,000; so that in ten years they have reduced the debt by £7,000,000, at which rate it will be entirely extinguished in 1872. It would appear, therefore, that the finances of Prussia are in a more prosperous state than either those of Austria, France, or Great Britain, in all of which, although their national resources are incomparably greater, the expenditure exceeds the income by a very considerable sum, and all thoughts of a sinking fund, or of a permanent system for the reduction of the debt, have been practically abandoned; a fact which speaks volumes as to the patriotic spirit of the Prussian people, and the economy and far-seeing policy of its government, especially when the large military establishment they are obliged to keep up to secure their independence is taken into consideration.¹

The military establishment of Prussia is greater, in proportion to its population, than that of any other country in Europe. It consists, in time of peace, of one hundred and twenty-two thousand men: but so admir-

* The particulars are—

	Florins.		
Direct Taxes,	26,802,837	or	£2,680,253
Indirect,	40,740,000	..	4,074,000
Domains and forests,	7,171,428	..	717,142
Mines,	1,310,000	..	131,000
Lottery,	1,327,443	..	131,000
Miscellaneous,	438,572	..	43,857
Total,	79,810,000	..	£7,981,000

—TCHOBORSKI'S *Finances d'Autriche et de la Prusse*, i. 4, 5.

† The particulars are—

	Florins.		
Interest of Public Debt, including			
Sinking Fund,	12,254,286	or	£1,225,428
Civil List and Court,	20,905,743	..	2,090,574
Army and Ordnance,	33,180,000	..	3,318,000
Miscellaneous,	5,300,000	..	530,000
Reserve Fund,	3,318,572	..	331,557
	75,238,571	..	£7,523,857

—*Ibid.* i. 9.

able are the arrangements for the augmentation of this force in time of war, and such the ardent and patriotic spirit of the people, that the state could then without difficulty call forth an army of five hundred thousand combatants. The regular army is composed of three classes. 1st, Of voluntary recruits, who are received from seventeen to forty years of age. 2d, Of young men who are balloted for: a burden to which all the inhabitants of the kingdom, without exception, are subject. 3d, Of veteran soldiers who prolong the period of their service voluntarily beyond the period required by law. Every Prussian, without exception, from the royal family downwards, between the ages of twenty and fifty, is liable to be drawn for the military service in some department or other; but he is only bound to serve in the regular army five years; and of these he is only three years actually with his colours, the other two being allowed to be spent at home. Thus the military duty is so short that it is never considered as a burden, but rather as an agreeable mode of spending the first three years of manhood; and there are very few who either can or wish to avoid it. The *cadres* of the regiments, or permanent staff, and a certain proportion of the privates, are fixed, and hold to arms voluntarily as a profession for life; and this gives to the troops, notwithstanding the frequent change of the privates, the consistence and steadiness of old soldiers, while, at the same time, it spreads through a large part of the people a practical acquaintance with military duties. It is to this system, introduced by the Great Frederick, but matured and brought to perfection by those able statesmen, Stein and Scharnhorst, after the treaty of Tilsit, that the stability and continual progress of the Prussian monarchy is, beyond all doubt, to be ascribed.¹

Besides the regular army, the military establishment of Prussia embraces also the *landwehr* and *landsturm*, which, in time of need, can quadruple its effective strength. The former is divided into two *bans*; the first comprehending all the young men from twenty to thirty-two who have not gone through the five years' service in

CHAP.
XLIH.

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10.
Military
establish-
ment.¹ Malte
Brun, v. 286,
287.

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XLIII.

1806.

11.
The Land-
wehr and
Landsturm.

the regular army : the second formed of persons, whether they have served or not, from thirty-two to fifty years of age. After that period all obligation of military service entirely ceases. During peace, the landwehr, which consists of infantry, cavalry, and artillery, are never called into active service, or removed from home ; but they are not on that account the less carefully and regularly instructed during a certain number of days in the year in their military duties. In case of war or invasion, the first ban are called out, and united to the regular forces, to whom they are soon scarcely inferior in discipline and prowess : the second ban form the garrisons of strong places, and perform the service of the interior. In addition to this immense force, which numbers fully two hundred thousand combatants, there is organised in Prussia a second reserve, called the landsturm, which embraces every man, without exception, not already enrolled in one of the other services, between the ages of seventeen and fifty years. Such a force in many countries would be little more than a tumultuary rabble, more likely to be burdensome than available in real service ; but in Prussia, where almost all the citizens have at one period or another served in the ranks, it forms a much more efficient body, and actually performed good service on many occasions during the glorious struggle of 1813.¹

¹ Malte
Brun, v. 285,
286.

12.
Great diffu-
sion of edu-
cation in
Prussia.

Education is more generally diffused in Prussia than in any other country of equal extent in Europe. Over the whole of its dominions one in seven of the whole population is at school ; while in France the proportion is one in twenty-three ; in England one in fifteen ; and in Scotland one in eleven. There can be no doubt that this is the greatest proportion of persons undergoing instruction which obtains in the world. Instruction is there compulsory : the laws compel the sending of children to school by their parents, and, when necessary, that duty is enforced by the magistrates. In general, however, it is unnecessary, so great is the desire of parents and relations to give their children the blessings of education. Schools are established in every parish, and the costs of instruction are very trifling, so as to be within the reach of the

humblest of the people; and to the destitute it is given gratuitously. The tree of knowledge, however, has in Prussia, as elsewhere, brought forth its accustomed fruits of good and evil. In Prussia there are, according to the most recent returns, no less than *twelve times* as many crimes committed, in proportion to the population, as in France, where education is not diffused to a third of the extent it is in Prussia—a fact which demonstrates, equally with the experience of every other country, the sedulous care which it is indispensable to take before that great instrument of *power* is put into the hands of the people.¹*

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XLIII.
1806.

¹ Malte
Brun, v. 277,
278.

The Prussian capital had long been one of the most agreeable and least expensive in Europe. No rigid etiquette, no impassable line of demarcation, separated the court from the people: the royal family lived on terms of friendly equality, not only with the nobility, but the leading inhabitants of Berlin. An easy demeanour, a total absence of aristocratic pride, an entire absence of extravagance or parade, distinguished all the parties given at court, at which the king and queen mingled on terms of perfect equality with their subjects. Many ladies of rank, both at Paris and London, spent larger sums annually on their dress than the Queen of Prussia; none equalled her in dignity and grace of manner, and the elevated sentiments with which she was inspired. Admiration of her beauty, and attachment to her person, formed one of the strongest feelings of the Prussian monarchy; and nothing contributed more to produce that profound irritation at France, which, in the latter years of the war, pervaded all classes of its inhabitants, than the harshness and injustice with which Napoleon, to whom chivalrous feelings were unknown, treated, in the days of her misfortune, that captivating and high-spirited princess.²

13.
Manners and
court of
Berlin.

² Bign. ii.
297, 299.

* In France and Prussia there were in 1826:—

	Prussia.	France.
Crimes against the person,	1 in 34,122	1 in 32,411
“ against property,	1 in 597	1 in 9,392
“ on the whole,	1 in 587	1 in 7,285

—MALTE BRUN, v. 278, and BALBI *et* GUERRY, *Sur l'Education en France*, iii. 786.

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XLIII.

1806.

14.

Its state
policy and
diplomacy.

A spirit of economy, order, and wisdom, pervaded all the internal arrangements of the state. The cabinet, led at that period by Haugwitz, but in which the great abilities of Hardenberg and Stein soon obtained an ascendancy, was one of the ablest in Europe. Its diplomatists, inferior to none in information, penetration, and address, had long given to Prussia a degree of influence at foreign courts beyond what could have been expected from the resources and weight of the monarchy. The established principles of the Prussian cabinet, under the direction of Haugwitz, ever since the peace of Bâle in 1795, had been to keep aloof from the dangers of war, and take advantage, as far as possible, of the distresses of their neighbours to augment the territory and resources of the monarchy. From a mistaken idea of present interest, not less than the influence of former rivalry with Austria, they inclined to the alliance with France, and derived great temporary benefits from the union, both in the accessions of territory which they received out of the ecclesiastical estates of the empire, and the increase of importance which they acquired as the head of the defensive league of the north of Germany. Little did they imagine, however, in what a terrible catastrophe that policy was to terminate, or anticipate, as the reward of their long friendship, a severity of treatment to which Austria and England were strangers, even after years of inveterate and perilous hostility. The interview at Memel in 1802, and the open support given by Russia to the Prussian claims in the matter of the indemnities, had already laid the foundation of an intimate personal friendship between Frederick William and the Emperor Alexander; but it was at first an alliance of policy rather than affection, and acquired the warmth of impassioned attachment at the tomb of the Great Frederick and on the field of Leipsic.¹

¹ Bign. ii.
300, 301.
Hard. vi.
401-7, 411.

15.
Efforts of
Prussia to
obtain the aid
of Russia and
England.

Notwithstanding the inconsiderate haste with which Prussia had taken up arms, the cabinet of Berlin made some attempts to induce the other powers of Europe to share with them the dangers of the conflict. With England it was no difficult matter to effect a reconciliation. At the first authentic accounts of the change in the policy of Frederick William, an order in council was issued, raising the blockade of the Prussian harbours. M. Jacobi,

the Prussian minister in London, returned to that capital immediately after he had left it ; and the British ministry had the generosity to resume its amicable relations with the cabinet of Berlin before an explanation had been given on the subject of Hanover. With Sweden an accommodation was also without difficulty effected, on the footing of the troops of that power taking possession of Lauenberg, which they did in the name of the King of Great Britain. It was not so easy a matter to convince the cabinet of St Petersburg of this unlooked-for change in the Prussian councils ; and, taught by the long vacillation of its policy, they were for some time unwilling to yield to the general joy which was diffused through the Russian capital, on the intelligence that war was resolved on. But no sooner was Alexander informed, by confidential letters brought by General Krusemark from the King of Prussia, that he had embarked seriously in the contest, than he instantly wrote promising an immediate succour of seventy thousand men, and announcing his intention of himself marching at the head of a chosen army to aid in the support of his faithful ally.¹

Important as the announcement of the intentions of Russia was, the accession of Austria would have been of still more value to the common cause, from its closer proximity to the scene of action, and the strong positions which the Bohemian mountains afforded on the flank of the probable theatre of war. The Prussian ambassador accordingly was indefatigable in his endeavours to rouse the cabinet of Vienna to a sense of the vital importance of joining heart and hand in the approaching conflict for the liberties of Europe. He represented to Count Stadion, then prime minister at Vienna, "that the losses inflicted on Austria by the treaty of Presburg were so immense, that the emperor, of necessity, must at some future period look out for the means of repairing them. The loss of the Tyrol is of such irreparable importance to Austria, that no doubt can be entertained that she will take advantage of the first opportunity to resume it from Bavaria, by rousing the patriotic attachment of the inhabitants of that important province to their ancient masters. Napoleon has justly conceived the most serious apprehensions for the faithful observance of that treaty which he him-

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1806.

Sept. 25.

Aug. 17.

Sept. 18.

¹ Hard. ix.

272, 275.

Bign. v. 413,

415. Dum.

xv. 285, 287.

16.

And of Aus-
tria.

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XLIII.
1806.

self has been the first to violate. Does he not, in defiance of his engagements, still hold the fortress of Brannau and the line of the Inn, six months after he was bound by a solemn treaty to have evacuated Germany with all his forces? The recent establishment of the Confederation of the Rhine, and dissolution of the Germanic empire, too clearly demonstrate with what ulterior views the French government is actuated in regard to the countries beyond the Rhine. Honour, necessity, the existence of his people, have forced the King of Prussia to take up arms alone; but a powerful Russian army, and the well-known generosity of England, diminish the perilous chances of the conflict. Now, therefore, is the time for Austria and Prussia to lay aside their jealousies springing from the conquest of Silesia, and unite their forces against the common enemy, who is about to make the Confederation of the Rhine an outwork from whence to enslave all the other states of Germanic origin.”¹

¹ Hard. ix.
277, 281.

17.
But the cabinet of Vienna resolves to remain neuter.

Forcible as these considerations were, and strongly as the cabinet of Vienna felt their justice, there were yet many circumstances which forbade them to yield on this occasion to their inclinations. The conduct of Prussia for ten years had been so dubious and vacillating; her hostility to Austria, especially on the division of the indemnities, so evident; her partiality for the French alliance so conspicuous; her changes of policy during the last year so extraordinary, that no reliance could be placed on her maintaining a decided line of conduct for any length of time together, and, least of all, continuing steadfast in that sudden and perilous hostility in which she had now engaged, and the vehemence of which was the worst possible guarantee for its endurance. Who could ensure that she would not desert this alliance as she had done the first coalition against France, or abandon her policy as suddenly as she had done her recent hostility against England, and leave to Austria, irrevocably embarked, the whole weight and dangers of the contest? The Archduke Charles, on being consulted as to the state of the army, reported that the infantry, which had not yet been re-joined by the prisoners taken during the campaign, was hardly a half of its full complement; the cavalry but recently remounted, and for the most part unskilled in

military exercises; the artillery numerous, but the majority of the gunners without any experience. The treasury was empty; great part of the most valuable provinces of the monarchy had been torn away, and those which remained were exhausted by enormous war contributions, wrung from them by the enemy. Influenced by these considerations, the cabinet of Vienna resolved to preserve a strict neutrality, and issued a proclamation to that effect. However much the historian may lament that determination, from a knowledge of the boundless calamities which an opposite course might have saved to both monarchies, it is impossible to deny that, situated as Austria was at that time, it was the most prudent resolution which its government could have adopted; and that, if Prussia was left single-handed to maintain the cause of European independence, it was no more than she was bound to expect from the selfish and temporising policy which she had so long followed.^{1*}

CHAP.
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1806.

Oct. 6.

¹ Hard. ix.
279, 281.
Bign. v. 418,
419. Lucchesini, ii. 106,
112.

Hopes were not wanting to the cabinet of Berlin of efficacious aid in another quarter where it was least expected, and of a kind to paralyse a considerable part of the French forces. Spain, bereft of her navy by the battle of Trafalgar, blockaded in her harbours, destitute of commerce, cut off from all intercourse with her colonies, had felt all the burdens of war without any of its glories. The public indignation was hourly accumulating against the Prince of Peace, whose ignoble birth, exorbitant power, and immense wealth, rendered him as much an object of jealousy to the Castilian noblesse, as the uniform disasters which had attended his administration made him detested by the people. Still, however, that ruling favourite per-

18.

Spain long
obsequious to
France under
the Prince of
Peace.

* The instructions of Mr Adair, the British ambassador at Vienna at that period, were, not to stimulate the Austrian government to hurry into a war, of which the consequences, if unsuccessful, might be fatal to that country, but to offer its government, if they deemed the opportunity favourable for engaging in hostilities, or if the necessities of their situation compelled them to such a course, the whole pecuniary aid which Great Britain was capable of affording. Of the wisdom of this course of proceeding, no one who considers the precarious situation of Austria at that crisis can entertain a doubt; and it affords another proof of the clear insight which Mr Fox at that period had obtained into the insatiable ambition of Napoleon, and of the magnanimity with which that upright statesman instantly acted upon his conviction. "A man," says the Marquis Lucchesini, "unjustly styled by Napoleon and his adherents, the last prop of the pacific dispositions of the cabinet of St James's."—*Vide* LUCCHESINI, ii. 96, 97, *note*, and BIGN. v. 417.

Instructions to
Mr Adair on
the subject.

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¹ Lucches. ii.
99, 100.
Hard. ix. 285,
286.

severed, against the almost unanimous wishes of the kingdom, in the French alliance, till his pride was offended at the haughty conduct of Napoleon, who excluded the Spanish ambassador from any share in the negotiations for a general peace at Paris, and it was revealed to him, that in those conferences he had seriously proposed to take the Balearic islands from the Spanish crown, and confer them as an indemnity for Sicily, together with a revenue drawn from Spain, on the King of Naples. At the same time the assembling of a powerful army at Bayonne, ostensibly directed against Portugal, sufficiently indicated design to overawe both states of the Peninsula.¹

19.
At length
indicates
hostile dispo-
sitions against
France.

The light now suddenly flashed upon the Spanish rulers. They perceived, as Prussia had done during the same negotiation, that the French Emperor made use of the powers with whom he was in alliance as mere dependencies, excluding them from any participation in treaties in which they were deeply interested, and disposing of their provinces to others without condescending even to ask their consent to the transfer. No sooner, therefore, did they receive intelligence of the rupture of the conferences between Great Britain and France at Paris, and the resolution of Prussia to take up arms, than they resolved to detach themselves from the French alliance, and join their forces to those engaged in the cause of European independence. Despatches from the Prussian envoy at Paris to the Prince of Peace on this subject were secretly intercepted and deciphered by the French government, which from that moment resolved on the overthrow of the Spanish branch of the House of Bourbon at the first convenient opportunity. At the same time, the Prince of Peace, deeming concealment of his designs no longer necessary, issued two proclamations, in the middle of October, in which he enjoined the immediate filling up of the ranks of the army, and the formation of the national militia, under their constitutional leaders, in all the provinces of the monarchy.

Oct. 14 and
15.

² Ann. Reg.
1806, 221.
Lucches. ii.
100, 101.
Hard. ix. 285,
286.

Thus was the ambition and reckless disregard of national rights by Napoleon again reviving, on a surer basis, because that of experience and common danger, the great original European coalition against France;² and on the eve of the battle of Jena were the first sparkles of that

terrible conflagration visible, which afterwards burned with such fury in Russia, Germany, and the Spanish Peninsula.

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1806.

But although the greater and distant powers, with the exception of Austria, were thus arming in favour of the coalition, the lesser states nearer the scene of action were overawed by the influence and the authority of France. Napoleon was daily receiving accessions of strength from the states which bordered on the Confederation of the Rhine. The Archduke Ferdinand, though brother to the Emperor of Austria, gave the first example of defection by joining his states of Wurtzburg to that alliance; the Elector of Hesse, whom interest as well as family connexions strongly inclined to the cause of Prussia, was nevertheless so overcome by his apprehensions, as to persist, notwithstanding the utmost efforts of the cabinet of Berlin, in a forced neutrality; the Elector of Cassel, summoned to each of the hostile camps, and sorely perplexed between his inclinations and his apprehensions, put his troops on the war footing of twenty thousand men, and contrived to protract his ultimate decision till the battle of Jena rendered submission to France a matter of necessity. Saxony alone, conterminous along its northern frontier with Prussia, and capable from its strength of adopting a more generous resolution, openly joined the cabinet of Berlin; but twenty thousand men were all that it brought to the standards of the Great Frederick.¹

20.
The lesser
German
powers in-
cline to
France.

Sept. 25.

¹ Bign. v.
435, 442.
Dum. xv.
287, 288.

The whole weight of the contest, therefore, fell on Prussia; for although great and efficacious aid might be expected to be derived in time from Russia, and succours were hoped for from England, both in men and money, yet these auxiliaries were as yet far distant. The Muscovite battalions were still cantoned on the Niemen; those of England had not yet left the Thames; while Napoleon, at the head of a hundred and eighty thousand veteran troops, was rapidly approaching the Thuringian Forest. Nothing daunted, however, by this formidable prospect, Frederick William gallantly took the field, and directed all the disposable troops of the monarchy towards Saxony and Erfurth. The total military strength of the kingdom was two hundred and forty thousand men, of whom one hundred and twenty thousand were assembled on the

21.
Preparations
of Prussia.
Forces on
both sides.

CHAP.
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1806.

¹ Lucches.
ii. 117, 118.
Dum. xv.
289. Jom. ii.
275, 276.
Hard. ix.
299, 300.

frontier, and twelve thousand were in observation in Westphalia, for the approaching campaign; the remainder being dispersed in garrison depots, or not yet put in a state for active operations. Such was the general enthusiasm, and so little did they anticipate the terrible reverses which awaited them, that the Prussian guards marched out of Berlin, singing triumphant airs, amidst the shouts of the inhabitants, almost in a state of sedition from the tumultuous joy they experienced on at length being about to measure their strength with the enemy.¹*

22.
Her grievous
want of fore-
sight and de-
fensive mea-
sures.

The memorable military operations of the year 1813, and the tenacious hold which Napoleon then kept of the fortresses on the Elbe, when assailed by the greatly superior forces of the coalition, have demonstrated that no position in Europe is more susceptible of defence than the course of that river; and that supported by the ramparts of Magdeburg, Wittenburg, Dresden, and Torgau, an inferior force may there for a considerable time prolong its defence against an enemy possessing an overwhelming superiority in the field. Had these fortresses been properly armed and provisioned, and the Prussians been commanded by a general capable of turning to the best advantage the means of defence which they afforded, it is probable that as protracted a contest might have been

* Napoleon's army was divided into nine corps, and stationed as follows, on the 3d October, when he arrived at Wurtzburg,—

First corps—Bernadotte—at Lichtenfelds.

Second do.—Marmont—Illyria.

Third do.—Davoust—Bamberg.

Fourth do.—Soult—between Amberg and Bamberg.

Fifth do.—Lefebvre, succeeded by Lannes—in front of Schweinfurth.

Sixth do.—Ney—Nuremberg.

Seventh do.—Augereau—Wurtzburg.

Cavalry do.—Murat—between Wurtzburg and Cronach.

Imperial Guard—Bessieres and Lefebvre, after Lannes got the 5th corps—Wurtzburg.

The bulk of the army was grouped round Coburg and Bamberg. The whole force bearing on the Prussians, exclusive of Marmont in Illyria, was 150,000 men.

The Prussians, when the campaign opened, were divided into three armies: the right wing under General Ruchel, of 30,000 men, was stationed on the frontiers of the Hessian territories; the centre, 55,000 strong, commanded by the King in person, with his lieutenant-general, the Duke of Brunswick, under his orders, was behind the Elbe around Magdeburg, with its advanced guard on the Saale; the left wing, composed of 40,000 men, including the Saxons, was commanded by Prince Hohenlohe, with Prince Louis, the King's brother, under him. It was assembled in Saxony; its extreme left rested on the Bohemian mountains, and its advanced posts were pushed as far as Hof and the Kirchberg. A detached corps of 12,000 men, in Westphalia, was under the orders of a general destined for future celebrity—BLUCHER.—See DUMAS, xv. 290, 514: and JOM. ii. 275, 276; and the *Official Report of the Prussian strength to the Duke of Brunswick*, HARD. ix. 484, App. G.

maintained as Napoleon supported in 1796 on the Adige, or Kray in 1800 around the bastions of Ulm, and time gained for the arrival of the Russians before a decisive blow was struck in the centre of Germany. But not only had no preparations for such a defensive system been made, but the nation, as well as its rulers, were in such a state of exultation as to despise them. None of these important bulwarks were provisioned; hardly were guns mounted on their ramparts. The interior fortified towns on the Oder and in Silesia were for the most part in the most deplorable state. No depôts were formed; no provision for recruiting the army in case of disaster made. They had not even a rallying point assigned in the event of defeat, though the strong fortresses of Magdeburg, Wittenberg, and Torgau lay immediately in the rear of the theatre of war, and the Elbe spread its ample stream to arrest the victor. Careless of the future, chanting songs of victory, and enjoying its triumphant march through the villages, the army bent its steps towards Erfurth; strong in the recollection of the Great Frederick, stronger still in the anticipation of the overthrow of Napoleon, and dreaming rather of the banks of the Rhine or the plains of Champagne, than of the shores of the Vistula or the fields of Poland.¹

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1806.

¹ Hard. ix.
297, 300.
Lucches. ii.
117, 120.

But if the infatuation of the army was great, greater still was the delusion of its commanders. The Duke of Brunswick, though an able man of the last century, and enjoying a great reputation, was altogether behind the age, and ignorant of the perilous chances of a war with the veteran legions and numerous columns of Napoleon. The disasters of the late campaigns were by him ascribed entirely to timidity or want of skill in the Austrians; the true way to combat the French, he constantly maintained, was to assume a vigorous offensive, and paralyse their military enthusiasm by compelling them to defend their own positions. That there was some truth in this opinion, no one acquainted with the character and history of the French army could deny: but unfortunately it required, for its successful application, both a general and an army very different from the Prussian at this period. The former did not possess the energy and rapidity, the latter the strength or experience, requisite for so perilous

23.
Imprudent
conduct of
the Prussian
generals.

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a system. Bold even to rashness in the original conception of the campaign, the Duke of Brunswick was vacillating and irresolute when he came to carry it into execution ; and, while his opponent was counting hours and minutes in the march of his indefatigable legions, he frequently lost whole days in deliberation or councils of war, or changed the destination of the forces when their movements were half completed. The troops indeed were numerous and perfectly disciplined : the artillery admirable ; the cavalry magnificent ; the staff skilful and highly educated, but in matters of theory and detail, rather than the practical disposal of large masses in presence of a powerful and enterprising enemy. But what the whole army, from the general to the lowest drummer, were alike ignorant of, was the terrible vehemence and rapidity which Napoleon had introduced into modern war, by the union of consummate skill at headquarters with enormous masses and a vast application of physical force ; combining thus the talent of Cæsar or Turenne with the fierceness of the sweep of Scythian warfare. Applying then to the present the experience of the past age, the usual error of second-rate men, they calculated their measures upon the supposition of a war of manœuvres, when one of annihilation awaited them ; and advanced as against the columns of Daun or Laudohn, when they were in presence of Napoleon and an hundred and fifty thousand men.¹

¹ Hard. ix.
301, 303.
Jom. ii. 279.

24.
Proclamation
of Napoleon
to his soldiers,
7th Oct.

As usual in such cases, the contending parties prefaced the war of arms by mutual manifestoes calculated to rouse the spirit of their respective forces, or vindicate their hostility in the eyes of Europe. That of Napoleon, which bore intrinsic evidence of his composition, was, as usual, admirably calculated to dazzle and stimulate his followers. "Soldiers ! the order for your return to France was already issued : you had already approached it by several marches : triumphal fêtes awaited you ; preparations for your reception were already made in the capital : but whilst we were surrendering ourselves to a too confident security, new conspiracies were formed under the mask of friendship and alliance. Cries of war have been heard from Berlin : for two months provocations have daily been offered to us ; the same insane spirit which, taking the advantage of our dissensions fourteen years ago, conducted

the Prussians into the plains of Champagne, still prevails in their councils. If it is no longer Paris which they propose to raze to its foundation, it is now their standards which they announce their intention of planting in the capitals of our allies; it is Saxony which they wish to compel to renounce, by a shameful transaction, its independence, and range itself by their side; it is your laurels which they wish to tear from your brows: they insist upon our evacuating Germany at the mere sight of their army! The fools! Let them learn that it is a thousand times easier to destroy the great capital than to wither the honours of a great people and its allies. Their projects were then confounded: they found in the plains of Champagne, defeat, shame, and death: but the lessons of experience are forgotten; and there are men in whom the feelings of hatred and jealousy are never extinguished. Soldiers! there is not one among you who would return to France by any other path but that of honour. We should never re-enter there except under triumphal arches. What then! shall we have braved the seasons, the seas, the deserts—vanquished Europe, repeatedly coalesced against us—extended our glory from the east to the west—to return at last to our country like deserters, after having abandoned our allies, and to hear it said that the French eagle fled at the mere sight of the Prussian standards? But they have already arrived at our advanced posts. Let us then march, since moderation has not been able to awaken them from this astonishing trance: let the Prussian army experience the same fate which it did fourteen years ago: let them learn that if it is easy, by means of the friendship of a great people, to acquire power and dominions, its enmity, though capable of being roused only by an abandonment of every principle of wisdom and reason, is more terrible than the tempests of the ocean.”¹

¹ Dum. xiv.
 4, 6.

Less fitted to rouse the military passions and warlike enthusiasm of its subjects, than this masterpiece of Napoleon, the Prussian manifesto, drawn by Gentz, was yet a model of dignified reason, and concluded with a sentiment as to the ultimate issue of the contest, which subsequent events have rendered prophetic. “All our efforts, and those of our allies, to preserve peace have proved unsuccessful; and if we are not willing to abandon to the

25.
 Reply of
 Prussia.

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despotism of an implacable enemy, and to deliver over to his devouring armies the whole north of Germany, and perhaps of Europe, a war is inevitable. His majesty has resolved upon it, because the honour and security of the state are in danger : he would have deemed himself happy could he have attained the same end by pacific means ; but it is with the firmest confidence that he takes the command of the army which is about to combat for its country and national honour, because the cause in which it is engaged is just. His majesty is well aware that for long the army desired war ; and even when circumstances prevented him from yielding to its wishes, these wishes commanded his respect, because they took their origin in those feelings of honour and patriotism which have ever distinguished the Prussian forces. The nation, in a body, has manifested the warm interest which it takes in this conflict ; and that strong expression of enthusiasm has confirmed his majesty in the opinion that now it is not only unavoidable, but in unison with the wishes of all the people. His majesty is convinced that the desire to preserve unchanged the national honour, and the glory which the Great Frederick has shed over our arms, will suffice to excite the army to combat with its accustomed valour, and to support with constancy all its fatigues.

26.
The true
character of
the war as
asserted in it.

“ But this war possesses even a more general interest. We have to deal with an enemy who all around us has beaten the most numerous armies, humbled their most powerful states, annihilated their most venerable constitutions ; ravished from several nations their honour, from others their independence. A similar fate awaited the Prussian monarchy ; numerous armies menaced your frontiers ; they were daily augmenting ; it had become your turn to fall into the gulf, to bow beneath a stranger yoke ; and already his pride and rapacity coveted the spoils of the north of Germany. Thus we combat for our independence, for our hearths, for all that is dear to us ; and if God gives victory to the just side, to our arms, to the courage which burns in the heart of every Prussian, we shall be the liberators of oppressed millions. Every warrior who shall fall on the field of battle will have sacrificed his life in the cause of humanity : every one

who survives, will acquire, besides immortal glory, a just title to the gratitude, the triumph, the tears of joy of a liberated country. Who amongst us could endure the thoughts of becoming the prey of a stranger? While we combat for our own safety, to avert from us the deepest humiliation to which a nation can be subjected, we are the saviours of all our German brethren; the eyes of all nations are fixed on us as the last bulwark of liberty, security, or social order in Europe.”¹

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¹ Dum. xvi.
8, 10.

The opposite style of these two eloquent proclamations is very remarkable. Both are addressed to the strongest passions of the human breast; both are masterpieces of manly oratory; but the language which they severally employ is strikingly characteristic of the different situations in which their authors respectively stood. Napoleon speaks to his soldiers only of an insult offered to their arms—of glory and triumphs, and victories to be won: Frederick William, equally firm, but less sanguine as to the result, disguises not the dangers and chances of the struggle, but reminds them of the duty they owe to themselves, their country, the cause of the human race. The former invokes the eagles of France, and calls on the soldiers to follow their glorious career: the latter appeals to the God of battles, and anticipates from his aid a final triumph to the arms of freedom. The battle of Jena and chains of Tilsit seemed for long to have announced an abandonment of this cause by the care of Providence; but let these words be borne in mind, and compared with the final issue of the contest.

27.

Reflections
on these pro-
clamations.

Napoleon had no gallantry or chivalrous feeling in his breast. The Prussian minister had, with the ultimatum of the cabinet of Berlin, given a pressing request for an answer to the Prussian headquarters by the 8th October. “Marshal,” said he to Berthier, “they have given us a rendezvous for the 8th: never did a Frenchman refuse such an appeal: we are told that a beautiful queen is to be a spectator of the combat: let us then be courteous, and march without resting for Saxony.” Francis I. might have used the same language; but what followed in the first bulletin of the campaign, dictated by Napoleon himself? “The Emperor was right when he spoke thus: for the Queen of Prussia is with the army, dressed

28.

Napoleon's
insult to the
Queen of
Prussia.

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as an Amazon, bearing the uniform of her regiment of dragoons, writing twenty letters a-day to spread the conflagration in all directions. We seem to behold Armida in her madness setting fire to her own palace. After her follows Prince Louis of Prussia, a young prince full of bravery and courage, hurried on by the spirit of party, who flatters himself he shall find a great renown in the vicissitudes of war. Following the example of these illustrious persons, all the court cries 'To arms!' but *when war shall have reached them with all its horrors, all will seek to exculpate themselves from having been instrumental in bringing its thunder to the peaceful plains of the North.*" Such was the language in which Napoleon spoke of the most beautiful princess in Europe, rousing her subjects to patriotic resistance! How singularly prophetic is the concluding part of the sentence of what he himself experienced just six years afterwards in the frozen fields of Russia.¹

¹ Nap. Bulletin, ii. 11, 12.

29.
Preparatory
movements
of the Prus-
sians.

Sept. 27.

Animated by those heart-stirring addresses, the forces on both sides rapidly approached each other; and their advanced outposts were in presence on the 8th October. Then began the terrible contest of the North with the South of Europe; never destined to be extinguished till the domes of the Kremlin were reddened with flames, and the towers of Notre Dame were shaken by the discharges of the Russian batteries. The first plan discussed at Berlin was for the whole army to debouche in separate columns by the two great roads, those of Saalfeld and Adorf, and Gotha and Eisenach, and commence the offensive towards the valley of the Maine, on the east and west of the Thuringian Forest, the intermediate passes of which were to be occupied by a central corps; but this plan was soon abandoned, as exposing the army to a perilous division of force in presence of so powerful and enterprising an enemy. The design ultimately adopted was to advance with the right in front, which was pushed on to Eisenach; next in échelon followed the centre, commanded by the King in person, which, united with the corps of Hohenlohe and Ruchel, was to advance upon Saalfeld and JENA, while each wing was covered by a detached corps of observation, the right by Blucher, on the confines of Hesse, the left by Tauenzlein, on the side of Bayreuth. The object of

this movement was to determine the hesitation of the Electors of Hesse and Cassel, and effect the junction of their contingents to the Prussian army, and at the same time pierce the centre of the valley of the Maine, which was the base of the enemy's operations, and cut them off from their communications with France. Both objects were important, and the design well conceived, had the Duke of Brunswick possessed a force adequate to its execution: but it necessarily involved his army in great hazard in presence of a numerous and skilful enemy; and by leaving open to his advance the great roads to Dresden and Leipsic, exposed the Prussians to the very danger of being themselves turned and cut off from their communications and magazines, when endeavouring to inflict that injury on their opponents.¹

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¹ Prussian
plan of oper-
ations. Dum.
xvi. 19. Jom.
ii. 279, 280.

Napoleon was not a man to let slip the opportunity which this hazardous attempt of the Prussians to pass his position afforded, of not merely defeating, but destroying their army. Confident in the numbers and experience of his troops, which rendered a situation comparatively safe to them, which was to the last degree perilous to their opponents, he instantly resolved to retort upon the enemy the measure they were preparing to play off upon him; and by throwing forward his army with the right in front, turn the Prussian left, and cut them off from their magazines on the Elbe, and the heart of the monarchy. On the 8th October, the French army was concentrated round Bamberg: at three o'clock on the morning of the 9th, Napoleon put himself in motion, and his columns marched towards Saxony on three great roads, by échelon, the right in front: on the right Soult and Ney with a Bavarian division moved from Bayreuth by Hof, on Plauen: in the centre, Murat with the cavalry, with Bernadotte and Davoust, marched from Bamberg by Cronach, on Saalburg: on the left, Lannes and Augereau, breaking up from Schweinfurt, advanced by Coburg and Graffen-
thal upon Saalfield. The effect of these movements was to bring the centre and right of the French directly upon the Prussian magazines and reserves, while they were stretching forward on the left, to interpose between their antagonists and the Rhine.²

30.
Counter
movement of
Napoleon.

Oct. 8.

² Jom. ii.
280, 281.
Dum. xvi. 19,
26. Bign. v.
465, 466.
Norv. ii. 456,
457.

The Prussians were in the midst of their perilous ad-

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31.

Duke of
Brunswick
renounces the
offensive.

vance to the French left, when intelligence of this rapid accumulation of forces on their centre and left reached the Duke of Brunswick's headquarters. It was indispensable to renounce forthwith the hazardous enterprise; and orders were instantly despatched to countermand the advance, and direct the concentration of the army in the neighbourhood of Weimar: the principal column, commanded by the King, at Erfurth; Ruchel at Gotha; Hohenlohe at Hochdorf; the reserve, under the Duke of Wirtemberg, at Halle. Thus the Prussians, in presence of the greatest general and most powerful army of modern times, were thrown into a change of position, and a complicated series of cross movements, with their flank exposed to the enemy, the situation of all others the most perilous in war, and which, not a year before, had proved fatal to the combined army, when attempting a similar movement in front of Austerlitz. To complete their danger, the concentration, from the orders which they received, took place on the centre and right; whereas it was on the left, towards Hof, that it should have been made, to resist the rapid march of the invaders upon their magazines and resources.¹

¹ Jom. ii.
280. Dum.
xvi. 26, 31.
Bign. v. 466,
467. Hard.
ix. 303.

32.

Commence-
ment of hosti-
lities, and
defeat of
detached
bodies of
Prussians.

But before the junction of the Prussian forces, even in this false direction, could be effected, the formidable legions of Napoleon were already upon them. As might have been expected, when surprised in this manner in the middle of a lateral movement, they were attacked at the same time in different quarters, and in all by greatly superior columns of the enemy. The French masses, dense and strong, marching on the great chaussées, fell perpendicularly upon the flank of their opponents when endeavouring, by cross and often deplorable roads, to reach the points of rendezvous assigned to them. The consequences might easily have been anticipated. They were defeated in every quarter, and lost, in the very outset of the campaign, the moral influence of an advance. On the 9th, Tauenzein, who was at the moment in front of Schleitz with six thousand Prussians and three thousand Saxons, was attacked by Bernadotte, at the head of greatly superior forces, and after a gallant resistance, dislodged from his position with the loss of several hundred men. The day following, Murat marched on Gera,² and on the road fell in with and captured a convoy of five hundred carriages

Oct. 9.

Oct. 10.
² Bign. v.
468, 470.
Dum. xvi. 51,
58.

and a pontoon train, an extraordinary proof of the advantage the French had already gained, when, on the third day after hostilities had commenced, they had fallen in with and captured a large part of the reserve trains and heavy baggage of the enemy !

Nor was the French left, under Lannes and Augereau, less successful. On the 10th, the former of these generals arrived on the heights of Saalfeld, and animated his troops to the highest degree by reading to them the proclamation of Napoleon on the opening of hostilities ; and on the same day, in continuing his advance, he fell in with Prince Louis, who commanded the rearguard of the Prussian right, and had been stationed at Rudolstadt and Blankenberg by Prince Hohenlohe to cover the cross-march of his columns, who were then endeavouring to reach the points of rendezvous assigned them by their commander-in-chief. This gallant prince, in common with his immediate superior, Prince Hohenlohe, had long expressed the opinion, which they had in vain endeavoured to impress upon the Duke of Brunswick, that Napoleon meditated an attack on the Prussian left, and that a concentration of their troops in that direction should have been made some days before.* Unable to prevent the disastrous resolution to assemble on the right, he now set himself with heroic bravery to mitigate its effects. The forces under his command were only eleven battalions and eighteen squadrons of hussars, with eighteen pieces of cannon ; and with these he had to withstand the shock of Lannes, with twenty-five thousand men. Notwithstanding this fearful preponderance of force,¹ he resolved to hold firm during the

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Oct. 11.

33.

Success of the
French left
against
Prince Louis.

¹ Lucches. ii.
137, 139.
Dum. xvi.
55, 57.
Oct. 9.

* In the great council of war, held on the 5th October at Erfurth, when the Duke of Brunswick's project of continuing the march across the Thuringian Forest was discussed, Prince Hohenlohe, Prince Louis, and Colonel Massenbach, his chief of the staff, strongly represented that, by continuing the march in that direction, the army would be exposed to certain ruin ; that they would soon arrive at a country where the ground was entirely favourable to the operations of the enemy, and adverse to their own method of fighting ; and that if the French were inclined, as seemed more than probable, to turn either of the wings of the army, nothing could favour this design so much as the plunging the Prussian host by columns into the Forest. These sage observations made no sort of impression on the Duke of Brunswick ; and all the modification of his plan which these generals could effect, was that the troops should halt for a day on the 8th October, and on the following morning throw out strong reconnoitring parties, and receive bread for eight days before entering the defiles of Thuringia. It may safely be affirmed that that council, by continuing this fatal advance, determined the result of the campaign.—See DUM. xvi. 25, 26, and *Saalfeld Allgemeine Geschichte*, iii. 299.

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remainder of the day, to gain time for the evacuation of the considerable magazines which were collected close in his rear at Saalfeld.

34.
Death of that
Prince.

Oct. 10.

In this gallant but unhappy determination he was confirmed from an opinion that it was only by resuming the old Prussian system of a vigorous offensive, that the spirits of the soldiers, which had been much sunk by the general order to retreat on the preceding day, could be revived. The sensible increase of the enemy all around him on the following day—even the turning of his right flank by Suchet with a powerful body of light troops, which rendered his position no longer tenable, could not induce him to abandon his ground; and, when the attack commenced, the Prussians were surrounded on all sides. Notwithstanding this they made a gallant resistance, and enabled the artillery and chariots to leave Saalfeld in safety. Returning from the town to his gallant comrades, who still made good their ground in its front, Prince Louis found them dropping fast under the murderous fire of the French tirailleurs. Soon their retreat was converted into a rout by the ravages of the hostile artillery; and the prince himself, while combating bravely with the rearguard, and striving to restore order among the fugitives, was surrounded by the enemy's hussars—"Surrender, colonel," said their chief, not knowing the rank of his opponent, "or you are a dead man." Louis answered only by a blow with his sabre, which wounded without disabling his adversary, who replied with a mortal stroke, which laid the heroic prince dead at his feet.

35.
Discourage-
ment of the
Prussians,
who are com-
pletely turned
by the
French.

In this disastrous encounter the Prussians lost twelve hundred prisoners, besides eight hundred killed and wounded, and thirty pieces of cannon; but this was the least part of their misfortunes. The heroic Prince Louis was no more: he had fallen, it is true, while bravely combating on the field of honour; but his body had remained the trophy of the victors, and the continued advance of the enemy too surely indicated that defeat had attended the first serious exploit of the Prussian arms.* Their army was now broken in

* No sooner was the rank of the prince known than Marshal Lannes, with deserved courtesy, showed his corpse all the honours due to so illustrious a charac-

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upon in several points; its concentration interrupted; its magazines in part seized; its line of march intercepted; and the dejected columns, without any fixed rallying points, were wandering about in every direction, while the terrible French legions, in dense masses, were falling perpendicularly on their flank. These disasters rapidly communicated their depressing effect to the minds of the soldiers. The death of Prince Louis, above all, equally dear to the officers and private men, diffused a universal gloom. So grievous a calamity in the outset of the campaign was regarded as the worst augury of its future fortunes; and, as is usual with great bodies in a violent state of excitement, the transition was immediate from the preceding exultation to an extraordinary degree of depression.¹

¹ Lucches. ii. 137, 140.
Bign. v. 468, 470. Dum. xvi. 51, 58.

Meanwhile the movements preparatory to a decisive battle continued, though in a very different spirit, on both sides. In deep dejection, and with infinite difficulty, the Prussians at length concentrated their forces in two great masses under the King in the neighbourhood of Weimar, and under Hohenlohe near Jena. It was in the highest exultation, on the other hand, and in the full anticipation of victory, that the French made a sweep which brought them completely round the Prussian army. The early triumphs with which the campaign had opened had given Napoleon hopes of rapid and decisive success. He had no longer feared that he would be obliged to have recourse to the mattock.* The confusion of the enemy's columns had dissipated the prestige of the Great Frederick. Encouraged by these events, he now hesitated not to follow out the brilliant career which had opened to his arms. A complete conversion, turning on the pivot of the left, took place in the direction of his columns, who wheeled

36.

Preparatory movements on both sides to a general action.

Oct. 12.

ter. It was interred with military honours in the cemetery of the Princes of Coburg, at Saalfeld; and Berthier wrote on the 12th to the chief of the Prussian staff, announcing that the Emperor had ordered it to be restored, if it was desired that his remains should rest in the tomb of his ancestors—an offer which the disasters immediately ensuing rendered it impossible for the royal family at that time to accept.—BIGNON, v. 469.

* In setting out for the Prussian campaign, Napoleon expected to experience a more formidable resistance than he had yet met with in Europe. The exploits of the Seven Years' War had filled him with the highest idea of the troops trained in the school of its illustrious hero, and he frequently said to his assembled officers at Mayence, "We shall have earth to move in this war."—See JOMINI, ii. 282.

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round so as to face the Northern Ocean. Davoust, Bernadotte, and Murat marched upon Naumberg, where, on the next day, they made themselves masters of considerable magazines. Soult was advancing on Jena, where Lannes was already established, while Ney and Augereau were at Roda and Kohla, in its immediate neighbourhood. Such was the confusion of the Prussian movements, and the bad understanding which already prevailed between them and the Saxons, that, when the French took up the ground which the allies had just quitted in the environs of Jena, they found the fields and roads covered with arms, cuirasses, and chariots, like the scene of a defeat. The Saxons had pillaged the Prussians, and the Prussians the Saxons. Baggage and ammunition waggons had been abandoned by their drivers, and lay scattered in confusion, while some guns even had been spiked to prevent their being of service to the enemy.¹

¹ Dum. xvi.
58, 64.
Jom. ii. 282,
283. Luc-
ches. ii. 140,
141.

37.
Result of
these man-
œuvres.

Oct. 12.

The result of these different marches was in the highest degree favourable to the Imperial arms. By the advance on Naumberg they had cut the enemy off from the line of retreat to Leipsic, and thrown their left back in such a manner that the French on the banks of the Saale had their back to the Elbe, and faced the Rhine; while the Prussians had their back to the Rhine, and could only hope to regain their country by cutting their way through the enemy. Finding affairs in a situation so much more favourable than he could possibly have anticipated, Napoleon, to gain additional time to complete the encircling of his antagonists, despatched, on the 12th, an officer of his household with proposals of peace to Frederick William, taking care meantime not to suspend for one instant the march of his columns; but the letter did not reach that monarch till after the battle was over. In the evening of the 12th the army of Hohenlohe, which, with all the additions it had received from Ruchel, did not exceed forty thousand men, was grouped in dense masses on a ridge of heights to the north on the road from Jena to Weimar, between the Ilm and the Saale. Its advanced posts were on the Landgrafenberg, a steep hill between its position and the town of Jena,² from the summit of which the whole lines of the Prussians could be descried,

² Dum. xvi.
72, 76. Jom.
ii. 284. Luc-
ches. ii. 141.

and over which the only road to the attack of their position in front lay.

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The army of the King of Prussia, on the other hand, under the immediate command of the Duke of Brunswick, sixty-five thousand strong, was concentrated at the distance of somewhat more than a league in the rear of Hohenlohe, near Weimar. Thus the whole Prussian army, consisting of above a hundred thousand men, of which eighteen thousand were superb cavalry, with three hundred pieces of cannon, was at length assembled in a field of battle, where their far-famed tactics had a fair theatre for development; and notwithstanding the early disasters of the campaign, an opportunity was afforded them of reinstating affairs at the sword's point. Each army had passed its opponent, and mutually intercepted the other's communications. But there was this extreme difference between the two, that the army of the Duke of Brunswick, cut off from all its magazines, had no resource but in victory; whereas that of Napoleon, though severed from the Rhine, had a clear line of retreat, in case of disaster, to the Maine and the Danube.¹

38.
Position of
the main
body under
the King of
Prussia.

¹ Dum. xvi.
72, 79. Jom.
ii. 284, 285.
Bign. v. 471,
478. Lucches.
ii. 141, 151.

It would have been well for the Prussians had they continued and given battle in this concentrated position; but the intelligence of the advance of Davoust and Murat upon Naumberg, which arrived at headquarters on the night of the 12th, led to a renewed separation, attended in the end with the most frightful disasters. Conceiving that the French Emperor had no intention of immediate combat, and being anxious for the safety of that town where the principal magazines of the army were placed, the Duke of Brunswick came to the ruinous resolution of again dividing his forces; and while Hohenlohe was left in position near Jena, as a rear-guard to cover the retreat of the army, the principal body, with the King at its head, moved at daylight for Sulza, and at night arrived on the heights of AUERSTADT. Thus at the very moment when Napoleon, with above a hundred thousand men, was making his dispositions for a general battle on the day following, and surmounting the difficulties of the approach to the enemy's position on the heights in his vicinity, the Prussian general dislocated the imposing mass of his soldiers, and diverging to the left with two-

39.
The Prussian
army is again
divided. The
King marches
to Auerstadt.

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¹ Lucches. ii.
141, 144.
Jom. ii. 284,
285. Bign. v.
472. Dum.
xvi. 79, 83.

thirds of his forces, engaged in a hazardous flank-march of ten leagues in presence of his antagonists, leaving a comparatively inconsiderable rear-guard to be crushed by more than double its force in its position in the rear. Such was the dearth of provisions which already prevailed in the allied camp from the capture of their magazines by the enemy, that no regular supply of bread was dealt out to the men after the long and fatiguing march ; but great numbers lay down, wearied and supperless, to sleep on the ground which was to cover their grave on the morrow.¹

40.
Napoleon's
dispositions
for the battle.

Meanwhile Napoleon, never suspecting this division of the enemy's force, and supposing they were to follow the principles of the Great Frederick, which were to combat in concentrated masses and on as confined a field of battle as possible, was endeavouring, with his wonted energy, to overcome the all but insurmountable difficulties of the passage of the Landgrafenberg, by which access was to be afforded to his columns for the attack of the Prussian position. No sooner had the French light troops dislodged the enemy's patrols from these important heights, than the Emperor repaired to them in person, from whence he distinctly beheld the portion left of the Prussian army still reposing at leisure on its formidable position on the opposite ridge. Not doubting that he would have to deal with their whole force on the following day, he pressed without intermission the march of his columns ; and soon arranged the forces of Lannes, who first arrived with his infantry above by the steep and rugged ascent to its summit, in such formidable masses around its declivities on the other side, that the enemy, who were now sensible of their error in abandoning so important a point, and were making preparations to retake it, were obliged to desist from the attempt. This valuable height, therefore, from which the whole of the Prussian position and all the movements of their troops were distinctly visible, remained in the hands of the French ; and its elevation not only gave them that advantage, but entirely concealed from the observation of the Prussians the rapid concentration of troops on the Jena side of the mountain, which would at once have revealed the intention of a decisive attack on the following day.² Still the difficulty of surmounting the

² Jom. ii.
285, 286.
Saalf. iii. 301,
305. Camp.
de Saxe, i.
260.

ascent was very great, and for artillery and waggons it was as yet totally impassable.

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Nothing, however, could long withstand the vigour of Napoleon and his followers. He stood on the spot till the most rugged parts of the ascent were widened by blasting the solid rock, or smoothed by pioneers; and when the men were exhausted, revived their spirits by himself working with the tools, and exhibiting his old experience as a gunner, in surmounting the difficulty of dragging the cannon up the pass. Animated by such an example, and the vigorous exertions of the successive multitudes who engaged in the task, the difficulties which the Prussian generals deemed altogether insurmountable were rapidly overcome; before eight in the evening the ascent was passable for cavalry and artillery; and at midnight the whole corps of Lannes, with all its guns and equipage, reposed in crowded array on the ridges and flanks of the mountain. The imperial guard, under Lefebvre, bivouacked on its summit; Augereau on its left; Soult and Ney received orders to march all night to the right, in order to turn the enemy by his left, after the combat was begun; Murat was in reserve at Jena; while Davoust and Bernadotte were directed, the first to fall back to Naumberg, in order to threaten the enemy's rear, the second to advance to Dornberg and cut off his retreat to the Prussian dominions. The two armies now lay so near that their fires were within cannon-shot, and the lines of sentinels in communication: the lights of the Prussians, dispersed over a space of six leagues, threw a prodigious glow over the whole heavens to the northwest; those of the French, concentrated in a small space, illuminated the heights in the middle of their position. Surrounded by his faithful guards, the Emperor, after having despatched his last orders to his marshals, wrapped himself in his cloak, and shared the frigid bivouac of the soldiers on the summit of the Landgrafenberg.¹

41.
And vigorous efforts to surmount the Landgrafenberg.

¹ Jom. ii. 285, 286.
Bign. v. 473, 474. Dum. xvi. 83, 94.
Saalf. iii. 301, 307. Camp. de Saxe, i. 260.

At four in the morning of the 14th he was already on horseback, and, surrounded by his generals, rode along the front of the line of Suchet and Gazan's divisions, which were first to be engaged, and were already under arms. "Soldiers!" said he, "the Prussian army is turned, as the Austrian was a year ago at Ulm; it now

42.
Situation of the armies on both sides, on the morning of the 14th.

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only combats to secure the means of retreat. The corps which should permit itself to be broken would be dishonoured. Fear not its renowned cavalry; oppose to their charges firm squares and the bayonet." Loud acclamations rent the air at these words: but the morning was still dark; the first streaks of dawn were only beginning to appear, and a thick cold fog obscured every object around. Burning with impatience, the soldiers awaited the signal of attack, but for two long hours they were kept shivering in their lines. At length at six, when the day, though still misty, was light, and the Emperor judged that his marching columns would be so far advanced on their respective routes as to justify the commencement of the action in front, he gave the signal for the attack. Meanwhile the Prussians, little suspecting the tempest which was about to burst on them, were securely reposing in their position, and, anticipating a day of complete repose on the 14th, had made no provision either for marching or battle. This fatal security had been increased by the opinion generally entertained at Hohenlohe's headquarters, that the bearer of the flag of truce who had appeared at their advanced posts on the preceding day, and had been forwarded with his despatches to the king, brought proposals of peace, and that nothing serious would be attempted till his answer was received. Their position was strong and admirably chosen: secure from attack on either flank, and approachable in front only by narrow and steep defiles, in which, if the heads of the enemy's columns were vigorously resisted and hindered from deploying, horse, foot, and cannon would be jammed up together, and the disaster of Hohenlinden might have been repaid with interest to the French army. But the departure of the king with nearly two-thirds of the army, and the total absence of any preparations for an attack on the part of those who remained, deprived them of the advantages they might otherwise have gained from this position, and relieved Napoleon from a risk in the outset of the campaign, greater perhaps than he underwent even during the perilous changes which signalled its later stages.¹

¹ Lucches. ii. 154, 155. Saalf. iii. 305, 307. Personal observation.

Great was the astonishment of the Prussian outposts,

when, through the gray mist of the morning, they beheld the French battalions close upon them, and advancing swiftly in the finest order to the attack. They made, however, a gallant resistance, and did their utmost to prevent the French, led by Suchet, from debouching from the defiles at the mouth of which they were stationed; but being altogether unprepared for the attack, and completely surprised, they were not long able to make good their post, and fell back, with the loss of twenty pieces of cannon, to the main body of the army. The ground thus gained by Suchet was of the utmost importance, for it enabled the heads of the French columns, after emerging from the defiles, to extend themselves to the right and left, and gain room for the successive corps as they came up to deploy. Roused by the first discharge of fire-arms in front, Prince Hohenlohe rode through the mist from his headquarters in the rear at Capellendorf towards the front; but, still confident that it would only prove a skirmish, he said to General Muffling, "that his troops should remain quiet in their camp till the fog had risen; and that, if circumstances demanded it, he would move forward the division of Grawert, as he did not wish the Saxons to combat at all that day." Soon, however, messengers arrived in breathless haste from the outposts with urgent demands for assistance, and Grawert was rapidly advanced towards Vierzehn-Heiligen to support Tauenzein, who there with difficulty held his ground against the impetuous attacks of Suchet. Meanwhile the whole army of the Prussians, alarmed by the sharp and incessant fire of musketry in their front, stood to their arms, and reinforcements were sent to the points in advance which were menaced: but in spite of all their exertions the enemy gained ground; the villages of Closwitz and Kospoda, at the foot of the eminence on which the lines of Hohenlohe were posted, were successively carried; and all the low grounds in front of his position were filled with troops. Still the mist was so thick as to be almost impenetrable; the contending bodies could not see each other till they were within a few yards' distance;¹ and under cover of this veil, and in the midst of the confusion arising from an

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43.

Battle of
Jena, 14th
October.

¹ Lucches. ii.
154, 155.
Jom. ii. 286,
287. Dum.
xvi. 94, 97.

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44.
Defensive
measures of
the Prussians.

unexpected attack, the movements of the assailants were completed, the defiles passed, and the precious moments, when the heads of their columns might have been driven back into the gorges by a vigorous attack, as those of the Imperialists had been at Hohenlinden, for ever lost.

At length, at nine o'clock, the increasing rays of the sun dispersed the fog, and his light shone forth in unclouded brilliancy. Then, and not till then, the Prussians perceived the full magnitude of the danger. On every side they were beset by assailants, no longer struggling through steep and narrow gorges, but deployed, with all their cavalry and artillery, on the open expanse to which these led. Directly in their front, the whole corps of Lannes, having made itself master of the villages at the foot of the Prussian position, was preparing to ascend the slope on which the latter stood: immediately to the right, Ney, and beyond him Soult, had already cleared the defiles, and were drawn up in line or column on the open ground; while Augereau on the left was pressing forward to turn their flank; and the imperial guard, with Murat's cavalry, were stationed in reserve on the slopes of the Landgrafenberg. Above ninety thousand men had out-flanked on either side, and were preparing to crush, forty thousand, in a strong position, indeed, but totally inadequate to so desperate an encounter. Surprised, but not panic-struck, the Prussians drew up their lines in admirable order in the form of an obtuse triangle, with the apex in front, to avoid the danger of being turned on their flanks; and instructions were despatched to Ruchel, who, with the reserve, twenty thousand strong, was at a short distance on their right, to hasten his march to the scene of action. Before he could arrive, however, the battle had commenced: the preparatory movements were made on either side in the finest style—the French columns advancing, and the Prussian retiring to their chosen ground with all the precision of a field-day.¹

¹ Dum. xvi.
97, 105. Jom.
ii. 286. Saalf.
iii. 306.

45.
Commence-
ment of the
battle.

But though they stood their ground bravely, and received their assailants with a close and well-directed fire, the odds were too great to give any hopes of success. Ney, indeed, whose impetuous courage led him to begin the attack before his columns were properly supported, and who

had, by a charge of cuirassiers, carried a battery of thirteen pieces on an eminence, which severely galled his soldiers, was for a few minutes in imminent danger. The Prussian cavalry broke the French horse, and enveloped the infantry in such numbers as would inevitably have proved fatal to less resolute troops; but the brave marshal instantly formed his men into squares, threw himself into one of them, and there maintained the combat by a rolling fire on all sides, till Napoleon, who saw his danger, sent several regiments of horse, under Bertrand, who disengaged him from his perilous situation. But on all other points the French obtained early and decisive success. Ney, extricated from his difficulties, with an intrepid step ascended the hill, and after a sharp conflict carried the important village of Vierzehn-Heiligen, in the centre of the Prussian position. In vain Hohenlohe formed the flower of his troops to regain the post: in vain these brave men advanced in parade order and with unshrinking firmness, through a storm of musketry and grape; the troops of Lannes came up to Ney's support, and the French established themselves in such strength in the village as to render all subsequent attempts for its recapture abortive. Emboldened by this success, Ney next attacked the right of the Prussian line towards Isserstaed, which Augereau with the French left had already carried: a devouring fire ran along the whole right wing, and the French were for some time arrested by the intrepid resistance of their adversaries; but the odds were too great, and despite of all their efforts, the Prussians were compelled to give ground in that quarter. But on the left of Vierzehn-Heiligen, they obtained some advantage: their numerous and magnificent cavalry made several successful charges on the French infantry when advancing on the open ground beyond its enclosures; several cannon were taken, and Hohenlohe for a short time flattered himself with the hope of obtaining decisive success.¹

¹ Dum. xvi.
97, 115. Jom.
ii. 286, 287.
Bign. v. 475,
476. Saalf. iii.
306. Lucches.
ii. 156.

Matters were in this state when the approach of Ruchel with his corps, twenty thousand strong, to the field of battle from the right, confirmed the Prussian general in these flattering anticipations; and he despatched a pressing request to him to direct the bulk of his forces to the village of

46.
The Prus-
sians are de-
feated.

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Vierzehn-Heiligen, already the theatre of such desperate strife.* Thither, accordingly, the brave Prussian directed his steps; but before he could arrive at the decisive point, matters had essentially changed for the worse, and he came up only in time to share and augment the general ruin. The lapse of time had now enabled the French to bring their immense superiority of force to bear upon the enemy at all points: Soult, by a heavy and well-directed fire, had driven the cavalry from the field on their left, while Lannes and Augereau, pressing them at once in front and flank on their right, had forced back their infantry above half a mile. Emerging from the villages which had been the theatre of such obstinate conflict, the French forces advanced with loud shouts and in irresistible strength towards the Prussians, who, weakened and dispirited, and in some places almost mown down by the terrible fire of their adversaries, were now yielding on all sides. Up to this time, however, their retreat was conducted in the most orderly manner. Napoleon saw that the decisive moment had arrived, and from his station on the heights in the rear, sent orders to Murat with the whole cavalry to advance and complete the victory. This terrible mass was irresistible. Fifteen thousand horse, fresh, unwearied, in the finest array, animated by the shouts of triumph which they heard on all sides, bore down with loud cheers on the retiring lines of the Prussians. In an instant the change was visible. In vain their cavalry, so brilliant and effective in the early part of the day, strove to make head against the assailants, and cover the retreat of the infantry and cannon: their horses, wearied by eight hours of fighting or fatigue, were unable to withstand the fresh squadrons and ponderous cuirassiers of Murat, and by their overthrow contributed to the disorder of the foot-soldiers. After a gallant resistance, the lines were broken: horse, foot, and cannon pressed tumultuously together to the rear, closely followed by the bloody sabres of Murat;¹ in the general confusion all

¹ Dum. xvi. 97, 120.
Bign. v. 476.
Jom. ii. 287.
Saalf. iii. 307,
308. Camp.
de Saxe, i.
262, 263.

* At this crisis, Hohenlohe wrote to Ruchel—"It is highly gratifying to me to hear at this moment that your Excellency has arrived to my support. Send all the force you can to the village of Vierzehn-Heiligen, the chief point of attack. You are a brave man and sincere friend. At this moment we beat the enemy at all points; my cavalry has captured some of his cannon."—DUM. xvi. 114.

order was lost: the infantry and cavalry were blended together, the guns and caissons abandoned to the victors.

In the midst of this appalling scene, the columns of Ruchel, still in battle array, emerged through the cloud of fugitives to stem the torrent.* It was a movement extremely similar to the arrival of Desaix on the field of Marengo: but he had to meet Napoleon, not Melas. The fresh troops, though advancing in good order, and with an undaunted countenance, were speedily assailed on all sides: an ephemeral advantage gained by their cavalry was rapidly, in the disorder of success, turned into disaster: in front they were charged with the bayonet by the French grenadiers, in flank assailed by an endless succession of Murat's dragoons; the villages of Romstedt and Capellendorf were strewn with their dead; and Ruchel himself, while bravely animating his men, was wounded in the breast by a musket-ball, and carried off the field. After a terrible combat of an hour's duration, this powerful reserve, which in any other circumstances would have changed the fortune of the day, was broken, dispersed, and almost totally annihilated. It was no longer a battle, but a massacre. In frightful disorder the whole army rushed like an impetuous torrent from the field: but nearly the whole right wing was cut off by the rapidity of Soult's advance, and made prisoners. Almost all the artillery of the Prussians was taken, and the victors entered Weimar pell-mell with the fugitives, at the distance of six leagues from the field of battle. Behind that town on the road to Auerstadt, Hohenlohe, at six o'clock, collected twenty squadrons, whose firm countenance till nightfall gave some respite to the wearied foot-soldiers, now dispersed through the fields in every direction; while Napoleon, according to his usual custom, rode over the bloody theatre of death, distributing prizes to those who had most distinguished themselves, and giving directions for the care and consolation of the wounded.¹

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47.

Arrival of
Ruchel, who
is over-
whelmed.

¹ Dum. xvi.
120, 133.
Bign. v. 475,
476. Lucches.
ii. 157, 158.
Hard. ix. 305,
306. Saalf. iii.
307, 308.

* The rapid change for the worse in the prospects of the Prussians since he first approached the field, may be discerned in the altered tone of the next letter despatched to him by Prince Hohenlohe—"Lose not a moment in advancing with your as yet unbroken troops. Arrange your columns so that through their openings there may pass the broken bands of the battle: be ready to receive the charges of the enemy's cavalry, which in the most furious manner rides on, presses and sabres the fugitives, and has driven into one confused mass the infantry, cavalry, and artillery."—LUCCHESINI, ii. 157.

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48.

Preparatory
movements
which led to
the battle of
the King's
army.

Oct. 14.

While this terrible disaster was befalling the united corps of Hohenlohe and Ruchel, the King of Prussia was combating under very different circumstances, but with little better success, on the plateau of AUERSTADT. Little expecting any engagement on the morrow, this fine army, commanded by the Duke of Brunswick in person, had bivouacked in close array around the village of that name: the Queen was only prevailed on by the most pressing entreaties to retire late in the evening with a slender guard to Weimar. Informed of the occupation of Naumberg by a considerable force, the Duke directed the division of Schmettau to occupy the heights of Koessen, and present themselves in battle array before the enemy, whom he supposed to be at the utmost a few thousands strong, while under their cover the remainder of the army leisurely continued its march towards the Elbe. These orders were obeyed, but Schmettau's division, contenting themselves with occupying the heights in the neighbourhood, neglected to send forward detachments to seize the defile of Koessen; an omission which was speedily taken advantage of by Davoust on the morning of the 14th, who, falling back to Naumberg according to his directions, early seized upon the important pass. At six on that morning, the French marshal had received an order from Napoleon, dated three o'clock A.M., from his bivouac on the Landgrafenberg, in which he announced his intention to attack in a few hours the Prussian army, which he imagined to be concentrated in his front, and ordered Davoust to march without loss of time upon Apolda, in order to fall upon their rear, leaving him the choice of his route, provided he took a part in the action. The despatch added: "If the Prince of Pontecorvo (Bernadotte) is with you, you may march together; but the Emperor hopes that he will be already in the position assigned to him at Dornberg." Davoust instantly repaired to the headquarters of Bernadotte, who at that moment was in communication with his corps in the neighbourhood of Naumberg, and showed him this order, proposing that they should march together to Apolda; but that officer, relying on the ambiguous expression in the despatch,—which indicated that the Emperor "hoped he would be in the position assigned to him at Dornberg,"

¹ Dum. xvi.
137, 141.
Bign. v. 480.
Jom. ii. 290.

did not conceive himself entitled to deviate from his previous instructions, and set out with his whole corps in the direction of that town.

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Left, then, to his own resources, Marshal Davoust, notwithstanding, began his march in the direction which Napoleon had assigned. His forces were considerable, amounting to twenty-six thousand infantry and four thousand horse; a body perfectly adequate to its destined task of falling on the rear of the allied army, when defeated in front by Napoleon, but little calculated to withstand the shock of fifty thousand infantry and ten thousand cavalry, whom the King was leading in person to the encounter. The Prussians, on their side, were as little prepared for an action; and, deeming their flank-march sufficiently secured by Schmettau's division on the heights of Koessen, were in open column and straggling, advancing on their march towards the Elbe, when suddenly, at eight o'clock, they were met on the plateau by the vanguard of Davoust, which had emerged from the long and steep ascent so well known to travellers who visit that memorable field, and was already drawn up in battle array on either side of its summit. The thick mist which here, as at Jena, concealed the movements of the opposing armies, prevented the troops seeing each other till they were only a few yards distant; and both parties deeming their adversaries only an inconsiderable detachment, fell back to collect forces to clear their advance,—the Prussians, to drive the enemy back again down the defile, and secure the flank of the army from insult; the French, to clear their front, and pursue their route by the cross-road they were on to Apolda.¹

49.
Battle of
Auerstadt.

¹ Jom. ii. 290,
291. Dum.
xvi. 139, 147.
Bign. v. 480,
481. Saalf.
iii. 306.
Personal ob-
servation.

Speedily reinforced, both sides returned to the charge. Davoust supported the advanced guard by the whole division of Gudin, with instructions to maintain themselves to the last extremity on the level space at the upper end of the defile, in order to gain time for the remainder of the corps to debouch; while the King of Prussia, impatient at the check given to the march of his army, ordered Blucher, with two thousand five hundred hussars, to ride over the Sonnenberg and clear the plateau of the enemy. Little anticipating the formidable resistance which awaited them, the Prussian cavalry were thrown into disorder by

50.
Additional
forces come
up on both
sides.

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the close and steady fire of the French infantry, which speedily formed themselves into squares. Their cavalry were, indeed, overthrown by the overwhelming numbers of the Prussian horse; but all the efforts of that gallant body, even when guided by the impetuosity of Blucher, were shattered against the compact mass of Gudin's infantry, and the terrible discharges of grape which issued from his artillery. Surprised at the obstinacy of the resistance, the King, adopting the opinion of Marshal Moellendorf, who insisted that it was only a detached column which occasioned the delay, and disregarding the advice of the Duke of Brunswick, who strongly counselled a general halt, and formation of the army in order of battle till the mist cleared away and the enemy's force could be ascertained, continued the attack by means merely of successive divisions as they came up to the ground. The divisions of Wartensleben and the Prince of Orange were ordered to pass the defile of Auerstadt, where the road runs through a winding hollow skirted with copse-wood or rough slopes, and advance to the support of the discomfited cavalry. The former, who first emerged from the defile, was directed to assail the flank of Gudin's division, which had advanced on the plateau beyond the village of Hassen-

¹ Jom. ii. 292,
293. Saalf. iii.
306. Dum.
xvi. 139, 150.

Haussen. At this moment the mist was dissipated, and the sun shone in full brilliancy on the splendid squadrons and regular lines of the Prussians.¹

51.
Desperate
conflict which
ensued at the
summit.

The Duke of Brunswick put himself at the head of the infantry, and led them gallantly to the attack, while Schmettau and Blucher pressed them with their respective divisions of foot and horse on the other flank. But the brave troops of Gudin, forming themselves into squares, resisted all the charges with unconquerable resolution; and the nature of the ground, which permitted the successive divisions to come up to the support of either side only by degrees, the one by the long and winding defile of Auerstadt, the other up the steep ascent of Koessen, rendered it impossible for the Prussians to bring all their overwhelming force to bear at once upon the enemy. The conflict, therefore, was more equal than might have been imagined, and most severe. The French troops, stationed behind the hedges, enclosures, and garden-walls of Hassen-Haussen, kept up an uninterrupted and murderous fire

upon the enemy. The Duke of Brunswick was mortally wounded by a ball in the breast while leading on a charge. Schmettau experienced the same fate. Wartensleben had his horse shot under him ; and the Prussians, discouraged by the loss of their leaders, wavered in the attack, which, being made in line, and not in column, was not pressed with the requisite vigour. Still the terrible discharge of artillery and fire-arms continued. Gudin's division had lost nearly half its numbers, and it was evident they could not long maintain their ground against their redoubtable and hourly increasing adversaries.¹

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¹ Jom. ii.
292, 293.
Dum. xvi.
139, 156.
Bign. v. 482.
Saalf. iii. 306.
Personal ob-
servation.

From this peril, however, they were at length relieved by the arrival of the other divisions of Davoust's army. Morand was the first who got up the defile ; his troops, as they successively arrived on the summit, drew up on the left of Gudin, towards the Sonnenberg ; and shortly after Friant, with his division, debouched upon the right, and extended to the foot of the Speilberg. The combat was now equal, or rather the advantage was on the side of the French, for their three divisions were superior in strength to those of Schmettau, the Prince of Orange, and Wartensleben, to which they were opposed. Prince William of Prussia, at the head of a powerful body of cavalry, which had surmounted the Sonnenberg and arrived on the French left, furiously assailed Morand's division immediately after it formed ; but those veteran troops, with admirable coolness, threw themselves into squares, and with rapid discharges received the repeated and impetuous attacks of the Prussian horse. In vain these gallant cavaliers, with headlong fury, drove their steeds up to the very muzzles of the French muskets. In vain they rode round and enveloped their squares : ceaseless was the rolling fire which issued from those flaming walls ; impenetrable the hedge of bayonets which the front rank, kneeling, presented to their advances. The heroic devotion of Prince William in vain led them again and again to the charge ; still the fire continued, still the bayonets remained firm. At length, he himself was wounded, half his followers were stretched on the field, and the remainder sought refuge in disorder, partly on the heights of the Sonnenberg, partly in the enclosures of Neuzalza.²

52.

Position of
the forces on
the field of
battle.

² Jom. ii.
192, 193.
Dum. xvi.
156, 161.
Bign. v. 483.
Saalf. iii. 306.

While this desperate conflict was going on on the left of

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53.

Desperate
struggle
around the
Sonnenberg
on the right.

Hassen-Haussen, the division of Friant had debouched from the defile, extended itself on the ground to its right, and chased the enemy who assailed it back to the village and heights of Speilberg, which were speedily carried. The left of the Prussians was thus threatened; but it was not there that the principal danger lay. The progress of Morand on their right was much more alarming. On that side, not content with repulsing the furious attacks directed against them, the French had now assumed the offensive, and were rapidly pressing forward to the heights of Sonnenberg, from whence their guns would command the whole field of battle, and render untenable the position of the Prussian reserves, which had hitherto taken no part in the action. Sensible that the battle was lost without resource if these important heights fell into the hands of the enemy, the King put himself at the head of a chosen body of troops, and bravely led them to the charge. But if the attack was gallant, the defence was not less obstinate: Morand himself was to be seen at the head of his regiments, and for some minutes the balance quivered. Insensibly, however, the French gained ground, and at length their artillery, dragged up to the summit of the heights, was placed in battery, and opened such a tremendous fire of grape and cannister upon the enemy's columns, as completed their discomfiture in that quarter, and with the blood-stained Sonnenberg and the village of Rehausen, the whole left of the field of battle fell into the hands of the invaders.¹

¹ Dum. xvi.
161, 164.

Bign. v. 483,
484. Jom. ii.
294. Lucches.
ii. 146, 147.

54.

The Prussian
reserve ad-
vances, and
is over-
thrown.

The experienced eye of Marshal Davoust now told him that the moment for striking the decisive blow had arrived. The heights at Eckartsberg commanded the line of the enemy's retreat, as those of Sonnenberg did the field of battle: by moving forward his centre and seizing that important point, their defeat would be rendered complete, and all possibility of their rallying prevented. Thither, accordingly, Gudin's division advanced, driving before them the broken remains of Schmettau's and Wartensleben's divisions, which had lost nearly half their numbers during the sanguinary strife in which they had been engaged. But the Prussians made one effort more to regain the day. Their broken battalions, which had retired from the field, were rallied under cover of the

powerful reserve commanded by Kalkreuth, who assumed the direction upon Moellendorf being wounded, consisting of two divisions which had hitherto taken no part in the action, and placed in front; while the whole cavalry, re-formed under Blucher's orders, was posted in a second line immediately behind the infantry, to take advantage of any hesitation which might appear in the enemy's columns. Wearied by a morning's march and four hours' hard fighting, the French soldiers had now to withstand the shock of fifteen thousand fresh troops, to whom they had no corresponding reserve to oppose. Had the quality of the troops on the opposite sides been equal, this powerful addition to the enemy's forces, at such a moment, must have proved decisive: but nevertheless they were totally defeated; and this last success put the keystone to the arch of Marshal Davoust's fame. Though strongly posted on an eminence, and protected by the fire of a powerful battery, they were charged with such intrepidity by Gudin's division, supported by a part of Friant's, that they were driven from their position with the loss of twenty pieces of cannon. At the same time, Morand repulsed an attack against the troops which he had stationed on the heights of Sonnenberg: the artillery, from that commanding position, carried death through all the ranks of the enemy; and at length his gallant forces descended from the eminence, and, carrying all before them, drove the reserves opposed to their advance through the defile of Auerstadt. Thither Blucher's cavalry followed the retreating columns: the guards still kept their ranks, and retired in good order in open square, and by their firm countenance enabled the broken infantry to rally at a distance from the field of battle, where Davoust reposed amidst his heroic followers.¹

¹ Dum. xvi.
164, 171.
Jom. ii. 294.
Lucches. ii.
146, 148.
Bign. v. 485,
486.

The King of Prussia, who, during this disastrous day, had manifested the most signal coolness and intrepidity, and, during the repeated charges which he made at the head of his troops, had lost two horses killed under him, gave directions for the army to retreat in the direction of Weimar, intending to fall back on the corps of Prince Hohenlohe, of whose disaster he was still ignorant. But as the troops, in extreme dejection, and with little order,

55.
Disastrous
retreat of the
Prussians
during the
night from
both fields of
battle.

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were following the great road which leads to that place, they were suddenly startled in the twilight by the sight of an extensive line of bivouac fires on the heights of Apolda. These lights were made by the corps of Bernadotte, who, adhering to his original instructions to march to Dornberg, had arrived in this position, after passing that town, late in the evening, and, ignorant of the combats which had taken place, was preparing to fall on the rear of the Prussian army on the following day. His too strict adherence to the letter of the orders he had received deprived him of the glory of sharing in either battle, endangered Davoust's corps, and had wellnigh cost him his own life, from the indignation of the Emperor; but, nevertheless, this sudden apparition of a fresh corps of unknown strength upon the flank of their line of retreat at that untimely hour, compelled the Prussians to change their direction and abandon the great road.¹*

¹ Dum. xvi.
171, 177.
Jom. ii. 295,
297. Hard.
ix. 306, 307.
Saalf. iii. 307.

56.
Meeting of
the two dis-
comfited ar-
mies in their
flight.

² Dum. xvi.
171, 178.
Jom. ii. 295,
298. Bign. v.
486, 487.
Hard. ix. 307.
Lucches. ii.
148.

About the same time obscure rumours began to circulate through the ranks of a disaster experienced on the same day at Jena; and soon the appearance of fugitives from Hohenlohe and Ruchel's corps, flying in the utmost haste across the line which the troops retiring with the King were following, announced but too certainly the magnitude of the defeat sustained in that quarter. A general consternation now seized the men—despair took possession of the firmest hearts, as the cross-tide of the battalions flying from Jena mingled in increasing numbers with the wreck which had survived the fight of Auerstadt. The confusion became inextricable, the panic universal—infantry, cavalry, and artillery disbanded, and leaving their guns, horses, and ammunition waggons, fled in mingled disorder across the fields,² without either direc-

* Napoleon's anger at Bernadotte, on account of his not supporting Davoust, and taking a share in the battle of Auerstadt, knew no bounds. "If I should send him to a council of war," said he, "nothing could save him from being shot. I will not speak to him on the subject; but I will let him see what I think of his conduct. He has too much honour not to be aware himself that he has committed a disgraceful action." In truth, however, Napoleon had no sufficient grounds for this ebullition. If Bernadotte did not take a part in the action, it was because his own latest instructions expressed a hope that he should go to Dornberg rather than march toward Auerstadt with Davoust. Had he violated these instructions, and, in consequence, the Prussian army had escaped by Dornberg, its natural and most probable line of retreat, what defence could Bernadotte have offered for his conduct? "I was piqued," said that Marshal, "to be addressed in the language of authority by Davoust; but I did my duty. Let the Emperor accuse me if he pleases, I will answer him. I am a Gascon, but he is still more so."—BOURRIENNE, vii. 161, 162.

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tion, command, or rallying point. The King himself narrowly escaped being made prisoner during the tumult and horrors of the night; and it was not till five in the morning that, by a long circuit, he arrived at Sommerda, where he received the official news of the melancholy disaster at Jena, accompanied by the letter, offering an accommodation, so insidiously despatched by Napoleon the day before that great victory.*

Such were the astonishing battles of Jena and Auerstadt, which, in a single day, prostrated the strength of the Prussian monarchy; and did that in a few hours which the combined might of Austria, Russia, and France, in the Seven Years' War, had been unable to effect. The subsequent disasters of the campaign were but the completion of this great calamity—the decisive strokes were given on the banks of the Saale. The loss of the Prussians was prodigious: in the two fields there fell nearly twenty thousand killed and wounded, besides nearly as many prisoners; and two hundred pieces of cannon, with twenty-five standards, were taken. Ten thousand of the killed and wounded fell at Auerstadt—an honourable proof, that if infatuation led them into the field, valour inspired them when there. Nor was that victory bloodless to the conquerors: their total loss was fourteen thousand men; of whom seven thousand five hundred belonged to Davoust's corps¹—a striking indication of the daunt-

57.
Loss on both
sides in these
actions.

¹ Dum. xvi.
177. Camp.
de Saxe, i.
265. Dum.
xvi. 180.

* Napoleon's official account of the battle of Jena, in the fourth bulletin of the campaign, is characterised by that extraordinary intermixture of truth and falsehood, and that unfailing jealousy of any general who appeared to interfere with his reputation, which in one who could so well afford to be generous in that particular, is a meanness in an especial manner reprehensible. Davoust was the real hero of the day, since, with thirty thousand men, he had defeated the King of Prussia in person, at the head of sixty thousand. His own achievement in overthrowing forty thousand, or, including Ruchel, sixty thousand, with ninety thousand veteran troops, including the whole cavalry of Murat, is nothing in comparison. Nevertheless, he represents the action as all fought in one field; speaks of the enemy, eighty thousand strong, as being commanded by the King and the Duke of Brunswick in person, and after dilating fully on his own achievements, dismisses the wonderful exploits of Davoust in the following words:—"On our right, the corps of Marshal Davoust performed prodigies. Not only did he keep in check, but maintained a running fight for three leagues, with the bulk of the enemy's troops, who were seeking to debouch on the side of Koessen. That marshal has displayed alike the distinguished bravery and firmness of character which are the first qualities of a warrior. He was seconded by Generals Gudin, Friant, Morand, Daultanne, chief of the staff, and by the rare intrepidity of his brave corps." Who could imagine that it was the glorious battle of Auerstadt which was here narrated? The injustice to Davoust is so manifest, that it is admitted even by the eulogists of Napoleon.—See BIGN. v. 487, 488; and *Fourth Bulletin*, 1806, in *Camp. de la Saxe*, i. 265.

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less intrepidity with which they had fought. Napoleon, with his usual disregard of truth, called his whole loss in both battles four thousand, little more than a fourth part of its real amount.*

58.
Unparalleled
disasters of
the retreat.

Great as were these results, however, they were but a part of the effects which ultimately flowed from these memorable battles. The disasters consequent on the retreat of the Prussians exceeded any thing hitherto recorded in modern history, equalled only by the still greater calamities which followed the flight from Waterloo. No provision had been made for such a contingency ; no rallying point assigned, no line of march prescribed, no magazines collected. The extraordinary circumstance of the four principal generals of the army—the Duke of Brunswick, Marshal Moellendorf, General Schmettau, and General Ruchel—being killed or mortally wounded, left the confused mass of fugitives without a head. The unparalleled calamity of the survivors from two different defeats, experienced on the same day, crossing each other, and becoming intermingled during the horrors of a nocturnal retreat, rendered it impossible for them to know whose orders were to be obeyed. Thus, when morning dawned on the scene of ruin, the soldiers from the three armies of Ruchel, Hohenlohe, and the Duke of Brunswick, collected, as chance threw them together, in disorderly groups, and inspired only with a common panic, fled in different directions, as accident or intelligence guided their steps. Vast numbers of stragglers wandered at large through the fields, or hurried with so little knowledge of the country, from the scene of danger, that, instead of avoiding,¹ they rushed headlong into the jaws

¹ Dum. 178,
182. Bign. vi.
3, 5. Jom. ii.
297. Hard. ix.
307.

* Davoust's loss at Auerstadt was 270 officers and 7200 privates, killed and wounded. Of these 134 officers and 3500 privates belonged to Gudin's division of 7000 men: in other words, more than a half of that band of heroes had fallen. This was the bravest action fought by the French troops during the whole contest: but the valour both of the corps and the division was inferior to that displayed by the English in more than one action of the Peninsular war, if the number of killed and wounded, a fair test with armies both of which have been victorious, is taken as a criterion. At Talavera, out of 19,500 English soldiers, 5000 were killed and wounded; nearly the same proportion as fell of the victors at Auerstadt: but at Albuera, out of 7000 English troops, only 1500 were unwounded at the close of the fight; and 9999 red-coats fell at Waterloo, out of a force of native English not exceeding 36,000 men.—See DUMAS, xvi. 177; NAPIER'S *Peninsular War*, iii. 541; and WELLINGTON'S *Official Account of the Battle of Waterloo*, *Ann. Reg.* 1815, *App. to Chron.*

of the enemy. It is in the extraordinary confusion arising from this disastrous retreat, and the terror which seized the minds of both officers and men at finding themselves thus huddled together with soldiers to whom they were perfect strangers, that the true cause of the unparalleled disasters which followed the battle of Jena is to be found.

The effect of the general consternation which prevailed speedily appeared in the fate which befell the fragments of the mighty army. Six thousand fugitives, almost without leaders, had taken refuge, the day after the battle, in Erfurth, whose embattled walls and almost inaccessible citadels promised the means of at least a temporary defence. It contained also the grand park and reserve artillery stores of the army, with the greater part of its camp equipage. Thither also the Prince of Orange, Marshal Moellendorf, and a great number of the wounded of distinction, besides seven thousand private soldiers, in the same mutilated state, had been conveyed. Such, however, was the terror of the governor at finding himself thus suddenly overwhelmed by a mass of wounded and stragglers, incapable of aiding in the defence, but who would speedily consume his slender stock of provisions, that he thought the best thing he could do was to negotiate a capitulation, on condition that the officers should retire on their parole into Prussia, and the private men remain prisoners of war. On these terms the place surrendered, and with it fourteen thousand men, including the dying Marshal Moellendorf and the Prince of Orange; a hundred and twenty pieces of cannon, and immense military stores, fell into the hands of the enemy.¹

Hohenlohe, who had retired, covering the retreat of the fugitives beyond Weimar with a considerable body of cavalry, in good order, at nightfall on the 14th found himself so completely overwhelmed by the crowd of stragglers who attached themselves during the night to his squadrons, that by degrees his array melted away; and it was only by making frequent circuits, and repeatedly crossing the fields, that he was enabled to reach Dernstedt at seven on the following morning,

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XLIII.

1806.

59.

Capture of
Erfurth with
14,000 men.
Oct. 15.¹ Dum. xvi.
200, 202.
Jom. ii. 298,
Lucches. ii.
159.

60.

The King of
Prussia gives
the command
to Hohen-
lohe, and
retires to
Magdeburg.

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XLIII.

1806.

Oct. 16.

at the head of sixty horsemen. On the day following, the King, who had arrived at Sonders-Haussen, accompanied only by his aides-de-camp, conferred the command of all the troops which had combated at Jena and Auerstadt upon Prince Hohenlohe, with the exception of the two divisions under the orders of Kalkreuth, the reserve at the latter battle, which it was thought would still be in some sort of order; but in the general confusion this corps had dispersed like the rest, and there remained only eight battalions around his standard. Magdeburg was assigned as the rallying point to the army, within the almost impregnable walls of which fortress it was hoped the wreck of its once mighty array could be reorganised, and a defensive struggle maintained till the arrival of the Russians from the Vistula, and the reinforcements which were collecting in the interior of the kingdom. Thither accordingly the King repaired, attended only by a few horsemen, to make preparations for the reception of the army; and there he was quitted by the British envoy, Lord Morpeth, who, seeing no chance of diplomatic concerns being attended to amidst the general confusion, returned to London to render an account to his bewildered cabinet of the extraordinary events which he had witnessed in the outset of his mission.¹

¹ Dum. xvi.
184, 192.
Bign. vi. 7,
8. Hard. ix.
307.

61.
Measures of
Napoleon to
follow up the
victory.

But if there was any one thing more than another in which the genius of Napoleon shone prominent, it was in the vigour and ability with which he followed up a beaten enemy. The present was not an opportunity to be lost of displaying this essential quality of a great general. Without an instant's delay, therefore, he prepared to pursue the extraordinary advantages he had gained. From all parts of Germany his forces had been assembled to one point, in order to strike the decisive blow. That done, the next object was to disperse them like a fan over the conquered territory, to carry every where the impression of their victory, and the terrors of their arms. On the night after the battle, Napoleon, instead of retiring to rest, sat up dictating orders to all the corps of his army for the directions they were to follow in pursuing the enemy. On the extreme right, Bernadotte, whose numerous corps was still untouched, received orders to advance from Apolda

to Neustadt, to cut off the line of retreat from Weimar to Naumberg, and so shut out the army from the great road to Magdeburg. Davoust was to return to Naumberg to hold that important post, and keep himself in readiness to debouch on the Elbe before the enemy could arrive there; Soult was to move on Buttelstadt, the point in rear of the fields of battle, where the greatest number of fugitives had assembled; Murat and Ney to march direct upon Erfurth, and reduce that important place: while Lannes and Augereau were directed to take a position in advance of Weimar; and the imperial guard and Napoleon's headquarters were transferred to that town.¹

¹ See the orders in Dum. xvi. 192, 193.

Soult was the first who came up with the enemy. At Greussen his cavalry reached the retiring squadrons of Kalkreuth's division, which alone preserved any semblance of an army. That general proposed a suspension of arms, in order to gain time, declaring that he knew an armistice had been concluded, and for the purpose of arranging its conditions repaired to the advanced posts in order to a conference with the French general. The terms, as might be expected, could not be agreed on. The statement was made in perfect good faith, under the impression founded on the letter from Napoleon offering an accommodation, written the day before, but not received till the night after the battle; and it gave the Prussian commander leisure to cause a considerable part of his forces to defile in safety to the rear. Enraged at finding himself thus overreached, Soult, the moment the conferences were broken off, attacked the Prussian rearguard posted in front of Greussen, which, after a short resistance, was cut to pieces, and the victors entered that town pell-mell with the vanquished. Following up his success, the French marshal, early the following morning, resumed the pursuit, and came up with the enemy at Nordhausen, where they were again defeated with the loss of twenty pieces of cannon, and three thousand men. Unable, from want of provisions, to keep his men together, and having no other means of escape to any part of his forces, the Prussian general divided his troops into two bodies, with instructions to follow different routes to Magdeburg. An almost total dispersion immediately followed this order.² The stragglers came into that fortress by companies, squadrons,

62.
Soult defeats Kalkreuth.

Oct. 15.

Oct. 16.

² Dum. xvi. 191, 200. Jom. ii. 299. Norv. ii. 465, 466. Lucches. ii. 161.

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1806.

Oct. 21.

and groups of single men in hardly any array ; and thus was the disorganisation of the only divisions of the army which still preserved their ranks rendered complete within three days after the battle. Collecting prisoners at every step, Soult continued rapidly to advance, and on the 21st his vanguard reached the Elbe, and planted their victorious standards around the walls of Magdeburg.

63.
The Duke of
Wirtemberg
is defeated by
Bernadotte at
Halle.
Oct. 17.

A more important action awaited the arms of Bernadotte. This able chief, whose too literal adherence to the letter of his instructions had deprived him of his share of the laurels of Auerstadt, was burning with anxiety to achieve some exploit worthy of the deeds of his comrades and his own renown, when fortune threw the wished-for opportunity in his way. The Duke of Wirtemberg, who commanded the Prussian reserve, fourteen thousand strong, stunned by the intelligence of the disasters of the army at Jena, was making the best of his way back to Magdeburg and the Elbe, when he was beset on all sides at Halle by the corps of Bernadotte. The Prussians who were brought into action, had not shared in the preceding defeats : notwithstanding the great superiority of force on the part of the French, they made a brave resistance ; and there might be seen what elements of success existed in their army had they been opposed by less, or guided by greater ability. Assailed with the utmost impetuosity by the vanguard of the French, under Dupont, at Passendorf, they were driven in haste back to the islands in the Saale, over which the road passes ; but in that defile they stood firm, and, supported by a cloud of light troops who lined the dikes on either hand along the margin of the stream, long withstood their assailants, and debarred all access to the gates. After an obstinate resistance, however, a column of grenadiers, headed by Dupont himself, rushed across the bridges, carried the guns which enfiladed them ; and, rapidly pursuing their success, pushed on and made themselves masters of the town.¹

¹ Saalf. iii.
307, 308.
Jom. ii. 300,
301. Dum.
xvi. 214, 223.

The Prussians had now no alternative to gain time for the retreat of their main body to Magdeburg, but to prevent as long as possible the French troops from debouching from the gates on its opposite side ; and the gallant efforts of the Duke of Wirtemberg long delayed them at that important point ; but at length the increasing numbers of

the French, and the murderous fire of the artillery which they brought up and planted on the ramparts, drove the Prussians from their strongholds in the gardens and walls of the suburbs, and enabled the columns to issue from the gates. Charged while retreating in open square along the level plain, the Prussians, during a running fight of four leagues, sustained severe loss from the enemy, and lost nearly their whole artillery; but they combated with heroic resolution, and still kept their ranks, when the pursuit ceased on the approach of night. Then the combat terminated on the right bank of the river; but on the left bank a greater disaster awaited the allied arms. Three thousand Prussians had broken up from their quarters near Magdeburg, in order to join the main body of the reserve at Halle, and, ignorant of the occupation of that town by the French, fell into the midst of such superior forces that they were almost all either killed or made prisoners. Honourable as this affair was to the Prussians, it augmented in an alarming degree the dangers of the army by dissipating its last regular corps; four thousand prisoners and thirty pieces of cannon remained in the hands of the victors, whose loss did not exceed twelve hundred men; while the broken remains of the vanquished crossed the Elbe in such haste, that they were unable completely to burn the bridge behind them, which was speedily restored by the French, who established themselves in force on the right bank, and drew their posts round Magdeburg.¹

Meanwhile the other corps of the army continued their triumphant progress with hardly any opposition through Saxony. Four days after the battle of Auerstadt, Marshal Davoust took possession of Leipsic: strange coincidence, that the French army should for the first time enter that city on the very day on which, seven years afterwards, they were there to experience so terrible an overthrow! ² Napoleon gave testimony of the rigorous warfare which he was about to commence against English commerce, by there issuing an edict of extraordinary severity against British merchandise.* Rapidly following up his success, Davoust,

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XLIII.

1806.

64.

Desperate
action which
ensued on his
retreat.

Oct. 19.

¹ Jom. ii.

300, 301.

Dum. xvi.

214, 223.

Saalf. iii. 307,
308.

65.

Saxony is
overrun by
the French.
Oct. 18.² On Oct. 18,
1813.

* "Your city," said Napoleon, "is known throughout Europe as the principal depôt of English merchandise, and on that account the enemy most dangerous to France. The Emperor and King commands—1. Within four-and-twenty hours immediately following this notification, every banker, merchant,

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1806.

Oct. 19.

Oct. 23.

¹ Bign. vi. 8,
9. Jom. ii.
302. Dum.
xvi. 223, 227.
Lucches. ii.
162.

two days afterwards, reached Wittenberg, at the very time that the retiring Prussians were preparing to blow up its great bridge over the Elbe; the French grenadiers rushed so rapidly over it, that the enemy had not time to set fire to the train, and thus that important passage was secured. On the same day, Lannes made himself master of the passage at Dessau. Thither Napoleon followed with his Guards three days afterwards; and regarding the capture of Berlin as certain and a secondary object, he already began to give directions for the march of his troops from the Elbe to the Oder. Davoust's corps was pushed on towards that capital, Napoleon having permitted, as a reward for his transcendant heroism at Auerstadt, that his corps should be the first to enter the capital of the fallen monarch.¹ *

66.
Investment of
Magdeburg,
which is
abandoned by
Hohenlohe.
Oct. 22.

Such was the rapidity of the French advance, that they arrived round Magdeburg before a large portion of the broken Prussians had taken refuge within its walls. Napoleon saw clearly the importance of accumulating as large a number as possible of the enemy in a situation where it was evident they would ere long become his prisoners, and therefore he gave orders to leave the entrance to the place open, and dispersed his cavalry in all directions to drive the stragglers into that devoted fortress.† Murat's horsemen, in consequence, inundated the adjacent plains; and

or manufacturer having in his possession any funds *the produce of English manufactures*, whether they belong to a British subject *or the foreign consignee*, shall declare their amount in a register appointed for that special purpose. 2. As soon as these returns are authentically received, domiciliary visits shall be made to all, whether they have declared or not, to compare the registers with the stock in hand to ascertain its exactness, and punish by military execution any attempt at fraud or concealment." Well may the honest General Mathieu Dumas exclaim, "What a deplorable abuse of victory!"—DUMAS, xvi. 225.

* Bernadotte was unavoidably detained a day longer than he was ordered in marching to the Elbe, and in consequence did not cross that river till the 23d and 24th, instead of the 21st and 22d, before which time the corps of the Duke of Wirtemberg had defiled through Magdeburg, and was in full march for the Oder. This escape of a considerable part of the best organised corps of the Prussians excited to the highest degree the indignation of Napoleon, who took occasion bitterly to reproach him with this delay, as well as his conduct in not marching with Davoust to Auerstadt. Already were to be seen the germs of that mutual discontent which, seven years afterwards, on those very plains, brought Bernadotte in arms against the French Emperor on the field of Leipsic.—BIGNON, vi. 9; DUMAS, xvi. 230.

† "Magdeburg," said Napoleon, "is a net where all the isolated men who have wandered about since the battle may be taken. We must, therefore, invert our manœuvres, and beat all the country for fifteen leagues around; we shall thus collect numbers of prisoners, and also gain accounts of the direction taken by the strong columns of the enemy, of whose route we have as yet no certain intelligence."—DUMAS, xvi. 232.

the garrison of the town, ill provided with subsistence, already began to feel the pangs of hunger from the multitude of useless soldiers who were driven to its shelter. Summoned to surrender by Marshal Soult, the governor replied, that he hoped to gain the esteem of the besiegers by an honourable defence; but the confusion of the garrison, and the evident discouragement of the multitudes of insulated men who thronged round the gates, rendered it more than probable that his resistance could not be prolonged for a very long period. Hohenlohe, despairing of preventing the investment of the place with so disorganised a wreck as was collected within its walls, and aware that the want of provisions would in the end compel its surrender, resolved to depart with all the forces which still maintained the appearance of order, and make for the great line of fortresses on the Oder; but such was the universal confusion which prevailed, that he could only collect fifty battalions and a hundred and sixty squadrons in a state to keep the field. With these he departed on the day following, leaving fifty skeleton battalions, hardly containing in all twelve thousand combatants, within the walls.¹

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1806.

¹ Bign. vi. 10,
11. Dum.
223, 237.
Jom. ii. 304,
308.

Upon leaving Magdeburg, Hohenlohe, abandoning Berlin to its fate, made for Stettin, situated near the mouth of the Oder, by the route of Spandau. But when he drew near to the latter place, he received intelligence that on that very day it had capitulated to the first summons of the advanced posts of the cavalry under Murat, and that Davoust on the same day was to make his entrance into the capital. Driven thus to a circuit to avoid the captured towns, he moved by Grandsee to Zeydenick, in order to reach before the enemy, if possible, the defile of Lochnitz, near Stettin, which would have secured his retreat to that important fortress. Aware of the importance of anticipating the Prussian general in these movements, Napoleon sent Murat forward with the cavalry to get before him to the defile, while Lannes advanced as rapidly as possible in pursuit of his steps with his indefatigable infantry. By forced marches, Murat got the start even of the horsemen who formed the advanced guard of Hohenlohe's corps; and on leaving Zeydenick, they were assailed by that active officer himself, at the head of Lasalle's dragoons. Con-

67.
Who is pur-
sued and as-
sailed.

Oct. 26.

CHAP.
XLIII.

1806.

Oct. 27.
 1 Dum. xvi.
 275, 285.
 Jom. ii. 308,
 312. Hard. ix.
 313.

68.
 Is utterly de-
 feated at
 Prentzlow.
 Oct. 28.

2 Dum. xvi.
 285, 290.
 Jom. ii. 308,
 310. Hard.
 ix. 312.

founded at being thus anticipated in a quarter where they expected a leisurely retreat, the Prussian horse made but a feeble resistance. Even the renowned regiment of the Queen's dragoons was driven back after a short effort, surrounded, and almost cut to pieces; and the Prussian cavalry were compelled to fall back on their infantry with the loss of three hundred slain, and renounce all hope of pursuing the direct road to Stettin. Driven thus from his line of retreat, and his right flank being exposed to the attack of Marshal Lannes, Hohenlohe, after waiting three hours in the vain hope of being joined by Blucher, who had retreated to the same quarter, changed his direction, and moved upon Boitzenberg, where he arrived on the 27th, hoping to reach Stettin by the circuitous route of Prentzlow; but in attempting to do so, the unhappy prince found himself again beset by his indefatigable pursuers.¹

No sooner was Murat informed of his change of direction, than he marched across the country all night, from the one road to the other, again got before him, and assailed the Prussian horse at once in front and flank with his terrible dragoons, on the following morning, as they were continuing their march two leagues beyond Prentzlow. To troops wearied by incessant marching for a fortnight together, and discouraged by such a succession of disasters, the shock of his victorious squadrons was irresistible: the Prussian cavalry were speedily broken, and fell back in disorder to the suburbs of Prentzlow, already encumbered with infantry and artillery. To complete their misfortunes, Marshal Lannes appeared at this critical moment on their right flank, having, with indefatigable perseverance, marched all night from Templin on the direct road. Murat now summoned Hohenlohe to surrender, which the latter refused, and brought up a powerful battery of cannon to answer the fire of the French artillery, which was severely galling his troops as they attempted to debouch from the town. This battery was immediately attacked and carried, and a regiment of infantry and cavalry which advanced to support it broken and made prisoners. Prince Augustus of Prussia, at the head of his regiment, which was still two leagues in the rear of Prentzlow, was surrounded, and after heroically resisting the repeated charges of the French cuirassiers,² during a

march in hollow square of four miles, was at length made prisoner, with almost all his men, while bravely resisting to the last.

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1806.

Overwhelmed by such a multitude of calamities, and seeing no chance of escape, while every hour increased the forces against him by permitting the formidable battalions of Lannes to arrive on his rear and flank, Prince Hohenlohe, after several unsuccessful attempts to obtain a capitulation, was obliged to lay down his arms, on condition that the officers should be dismissed on their parole. With him were taken fourteen thousand men, including the flower of the Prussian army; the guards, six chosen regiments of cavalry, forty standards, and fifty pieces of field artillery. Notwithstanding the many defeats and disastrous circumstances which had occurred, this grievous surrender did not take place without the most profound grief on the part of the Prussian troops. The officers retired from the circle where it had been agreed to in stern silence, or shedding tears; many of them fiercely and indignantly accused their commanders of treachery, and invited their comrades to cut their way through the enemy, sword in hand. The private soldiers, by loud sobs and lamentations, gave vent to their grief, and flinging their muskets on the ground, slowly and mournfully pursued their way into the town; while a loud flourish of trumpets, the quick rattle of drums, and the triumphant shouts of the soldiers, announced the successive arrival of the French regiments at the scene of their triumph.¹

69.
And compelled to surrender. Profound grief of the Prussian troops.

¹ Dum. xvi. 275, 299.
Jom. ii. 308, 312. Bign. vi. 19, 21. Saalf. iii. 309, 310.
Hard. ix. 313.

Of the army, lately so splendid and numerous, there remained only in the field the corps of the Duke of Weimar and General Blucher. The former of these, which formed the advanced guard of the host that advanced to the Saale, and had been pushed on through the Thuringian Forest to Verra, with the view of threatening the rear of the French army, had become entirely detached by subsequent events from the principal body, and thus escaped the catastrophes of both defeats. Almost forgotten in the rapid succession of succeeding triumphs, the duke was left to his own discretion; and he no sooner received accounts of the ruin of the main army, than he took steps for making the best of his way back to the Elbe. He had much difficulty in steering his course through the numerous

70.
March and escape of the Duke of Saxe-Weimar.

CHAP.
XLIII.

1806.

Oct. 26.

¹ Dum. xvi.
269, 272, 303,
306. Bign. vi.
23.

71.
Disgraceful
surrender of
Stettin and
Custrin.

Oct. 29.

corps of enemies which traversed the intervening country in every direction; but by great exertions he contrived to escape, and, rallying to his standard a considerable detachment of Ruchel's corps, which had been separated from the remainder, reached the Elbe in safety at Stendal, by Seesen, Schladen, and Lutter, with fourteen thousand men. He was there superseded in the command by the King of Prussia, and his corps passed into the hands of General Winning, who gave it a day's rest at Kigritz. As the approach of the French corps rendered those quarters dangerous, he broke up and retired towards the Oder, and by good fortune, and no small share of skill, he succeeded in reaching the banks of that river in the first week of October, where he joined Blucher with the cavalry which had escaped from Auerstadt. Their united forces now amounted to twenty-four thousand men.¹

Meanwhile, the fortresses on the Oder fell in the most disgraceful manner. The day after the capitulation of Hohenlohe, a brigade which had escaped from the wreck of his corps presented itself at the gates of Stettin; the governor sternly refused them admittance, upon the pretence that his provisions were only adequate to the support of his own garrison. Next day, however, he capitulated, on the first summons, to the advanced guard of Marshal Lannes; and the French, without firing a shot, became masters of a fortress of the first order, armed with a hundred and fifty pieces of cannon, and garrisoned by six thousand men. The brigade of Prussians, shut out from its walls, was soon after surrounded at Anclam and made prisoners. Encouraged by these repeated successes, the French soldiers deemed nothing beyond the reach of their arms; and the advanced guard of Davoust's corps, which had traversed the district between the Elbe and the Oder without meeting with any enemies, presented itself before Custrin, and threatened the garrison with a severe bombardment if they did not instantly capitulate. This menacing outpost consisted merely of a regiment of foot, and had only two pieces of artillery at its command. On the other hand, the governor of the town had ninety pieces of cannon mounted on the ramparts, and four hundred in the arsenal; four thousand brave men for a garrison, and every requisite for a prolonged defence. Nevertheless,

such was the terror produced by Napoleon's arms, and such the skill with which the French officer, General Gauthier, concealed the real amount and description of his force, that the Prussians capitulated almost on the first summons ; and one of the strongest places in the kingdom, amply garrisoned, situated in an island of the Oder, and invested only on one side, had the disgrace of surrendering to a regiment of foot with only two pieces of cannon. The besiegers could not approach it to take possession till the garrison furnished them with boats.¹

CHAP.
XLIII.

1806.

Oct. 31.

¹ Dum. xvii.
11, 17. Bign.
vi. 23. Jom.
ii. 314.

These disgraceful capitulations, at which the brave troops involved in them were so much exasperated that it was with difficulty they could be induced to yield obedience to their officers in carrying them into execution, demonstrated that the Prussian generals were so overwhelmed by the magnitude of their misfortunes, that they deemed the monarchy irrevocably ruined, and that *saute qui peut* had become the only remaining principle of their conduct. Astonished at his good fortune in effecting the reduction of such a fortress without firing a shot, Marshal Davoust inspected the fortifications on the day following, which he found in the best condition ; and, deeming his base on the Oder now sufficiently secured, pushed on his light troops to Posen, in Prussian Poland : while six thousand Bavarians formed the investment of Glogau, the only remaining stronghold on its banks which was still in the hands of the enemy ; and Augereau established himself at Frankfort, the well-known emporium of eastern Prussia.²

72.

Reflections
on these
events.

Nov. 1.

Nov. 3.
² Dum. xvii.
13, 20. Bign.
vi. 23. Jom.
ii. 314.

The only corps of the Prussian army which had hitherto escaped destruction was that formed by the union of Blucher's cavalry with the Duke of Saxe-Weimar's infantry, and commanded by the former of these generals.* Though its resistance, however, was

73.

Blucher's
corps is pur-
sued to Lu-
beck.

* Before this junction was effected, Blucher's cavalry had been hard pressed by a brigade of horse under the French general Klein, and escaped in consequence of his affirming that an armistice had been concluded on the propositions for an accomodation sent to Napoleon after the battle by the King of Prussia. Whether the Prussian general really believed the report to that effect, which unquestionably prevailed through the whole army at that time,³ or whether he made use of this very questionable military stratagem as a device to extricate his troops from present danger, does not appear ; and therefore neither praise nor blame can in this uncertainty be awarded on the subject. But this much is clear, that if he knowingly affirmed a falsehood, as the French assert, no necessity, how pressing soever, no advantage, how great soever, can suffice as any apology. But when the French historians inveigh with such severity against Blucher's

³ Hard. ix. 320.

CHAP
XLIII.

1806.

Oct. 28.

Oct. 29.

¹ Dum. xvi.
308, 318.
Saalf. iii. 311,
312. Jom.
ii. 217.

74.
Where he is
shut up.
Nov. 1.

more honourable, its ultimate fate was not less calamitous. No sooner was he informed of the junction of these two corps in the north of Prussia, than Napoleon ordered their pursuit by forces so considerable, that escape became impossible. Bernadotte was instructed to follow closely on their footsteps; while Murat was despatched by a circuit to cut them off, on the right, from Stralsund and Rostock, under the cannon of which they might have found shelter; and Soult threw himself on the left, to bar the communication with the lower Elbe. Blucher arrived at Boitzenberg the day after the ill-fated Hohenlohe had left that town; and having there learned the catastrophe which had befallen that brilliant portion of the army, he renounced all hope of retiring before the enemy, and retraced his steps in order to unite with General Winning and the Duke of Saxe-Weimar's corps, which he effected at Kratzemberg on the day following. Finding himself now at the head of eighteen thousand infantry, six thousand cavalry, and sixty pieces of cannon, he resolved to move to the right, recross the Elbe, raise the siege of Magdeburg, and, supported by that fortress and Hameln, maintain himself as long as possible in the rear of the Emperor's army.¹

The project was boldly conceived and intrepidly executed; but the three corps now directed against him, numbering nearly sixty thousand combatants, rendered its execution impossible. A sharp conflict took place with his rearguard at Nossentin, in which five hundred prisoners fell into the hands of the French; and the next day the junction of Bernadotte with Soult rendered it

conduct on this occasion,² and affirm, "In the campaigns of the Revolution, the Austrian generals have frequently had recourse to that strange *ruse de guerre*—*the French never*;" they forget or wilfully conceal immediately preceding events, on which they bestow no sort of censure. What is to be said to General Lecourbe, who, in November 1799, escaped destruction at the hands of the Austrian general Starray, solely by falsely affirming that a negotiation for peace was commenced? to Lannes and Murat, in the campaign of Austerlitz, who won the bridge of Vienna by the fallacious declaration that an armistice had been concluded, which they well knew was not the case? or to the latter of these marshals, who a few days after tried a similar piece of deceit with Kutusoff, and was only foiled by the superior finesse of that astute commander? Both the French historians, Bignon and Norvins, mention these unworthy stratagems, not only without censure, but with the highest admiration.³ It would be well, if, in making such random assertions, they would calculate less confidently on the want of information or recollection in their readers; and if, in the survey of the conduct of their own officers, they would display a little of that warm anxiety for the great principles of public morality, to which they so loudly appeal when any violation of it occurs to their disadvantage on the part of their enemies.

² See Bign. vi.
7, and Norv. ii.
466.

³ Rapp, 57, 58,
59. Bign. iv.
406. Ante,
chap. xl. §§.
104, 105, 108.

necessary for the gallant Prussian to be more circum-spect. An opportunity, however, soon occurred of taking his revenge. Next day the French hussars were charged and put to the rout by the Prussian light dragoons, at the entrance of a defile. Colonel Gerard and three hundred horsemen were made prisoners; but the cavalry having fallen back on the support of their infantry, headed by Bernadotte in person, the Prussians were in their turn repulsed with severe loss. Finding the enemy's forces so considerable, that all chance of making good his way to the lower Elbe was out of the question, Blucher resolved to fall back by Gadebush on Lubeck, where he hoped to find resources to recruit his wearied troops, and the decayed bastions of which he flattered himself he would soon be able to put in a respectable state of defence. Before arriving at that city, he was summoned by Bernadotte to surrender, and informed that he was beset by forces triple his own. "I will never capitulate," was the brief and characteristic reply of the Prussian general; and, continuing his march, he entered Lubeck on the evening of the 5th, closely followed by his indefatigable pursuers. In the course of the pursuit, a detachment of twelve hundred Swedes fell into the hands of Bernadotte, who treated them with unusual courtesy and kindness. From the gratitude of the Swedes for this treatment, arose the interchange of good deeds which terminated in his elevation to the throne of Gustavus Adolphus. At that period events, in appearance the most trivial, were big with the fate of nations.¹

Unfortunately for Lubeck, it was still surrounded by a ruined wall and deep ditches filled with water; and this gave Blucher an excuse for representing it as a military post, and disregarding all the remonstrances of the magistrates, who loudly protested against this violation of their neutrality. Hastily planting the few heavy cannon which he still retained to defend the principal gates, Blucher caused the greater part of his forces to defile through the town, and take post on the low marshy ground on the opposite side, on the confines of the Danish territory. At daybreak on the following morning the French columns were at the gates, and every preparation was made for an instant assault. In spite of a heavy fire of

CHAP.
XLIII.

1806.

Nov. 2.

Nov. 3.

Nov. 4.

Nov. 5.

¹ Dum. xvi.
308, 321.

Bign. vi. 23,

24. Jom. ii.

317. Saalf. iii.

311, 312.

75.

And is there
defeated after
a desperate
conflict.

CHAP.
XLIII.

1806.

Oct. 6.

¹ Dum. xvi.
322, 328.
Jom. ii. 317,
318. Hard. ix.
322. Bign. vi.
24.

76.
Desperate
assault of the
town.

grape and musketry from the old walls, the French advanced with their accustomed gallantry to the assault. The corps of Bernadotte advanced against the Burg-Thor, or gate which looked to the north; that of Soult approached the Huxter-Thor and Mahlen-Thor, or gates of Hanover. After sustaining a terrible discharge from the bastions, which were armed with the Prussian field-pieces, the French advanced guard, under Generals Merle and Frère, succeeded in breaking through with their hatchets the exterior pallisades of the Burg-Thor, and, rapidly following the Prussian regiments which held that out-work, entered the gate pell-mell with the fugitives, and made themselves masters of the adjoining bastions. At the same moment Soult's divisions threatened the gates opposed to their attack; but so murderous was the fire which the Prussians kept up from the walls flanking their approaches, that the assailants were unable to make any progress till Bernadotte's divisions, having penetrated into the town, threatened to take the defenders in rear.¹

Even then, nevertheless, the brave Prussians at this gate, to the number of two thousand, faced both ways, and, besieged in their turn, sustained the double attack from within and without. Posted on the roofs of houses, and on the summits of the ramparts, they kept up an incessant fire till their cartridges were exhausted, when they were all either killed or made prisoners. So rapid, however, was the advance of the French through the Burg-Thor, that Blucher, who had retired to his lodgings, after having made his dispositions, to dictate orders, had barely time to mount his horse with his son and a single aid-de-camp and ride off: all the rest of his staff were made prisoners. Having joined the remaining troops in the town, that brave general, with his gallant followers, prolonged the defence. He himself repeatedly charged along the König-Strasse at the head of a body of cavalry, but was unable to clear it of the French soldiers, who had now broken into the houses near the gate, and from thence kept up a fire of such severity upon the street as rendered it impossible for the dragoons to advance to its further extremity. Presently the besiegers brought up their field-pieces, the guns on the ramparts were turned upon the town, and repeated discharges of grape from both sides swept the

pavement, and occasioned a terrific slaughter. With invincible resolution, however, the Prussians maintained the combat. From street to street, from church to church, from house to house, the conflict continued. Blood flowed on all sides. The incessant rattle of the musketry was almost drowned in some quarters by the cries of the wounded and the shrieks of the inhabitants, who in that day of wo underwent all the horrors consequent on a town carried by assault. By degrees, however, the superior numbers of the French, who were soon reinforced by part of Murat's corps, prevailed over the heroic resolution of the Prussians. With difficulty Blucher succeeded, towards evening, in collecting five thousand men, with whom he forced his way through by the gate of Holstein, and rejoined his cavalry, which lay at Schwertau on the opposite side of the town, near the Danish frontier; while the remainder of his corps, in the town, consisting of eight thousand men, were slain before nightfall in that fearful fight, or fell into the hands of the enemy.^{1*}

¹ Dum. xvi. 332, 333.
Jom. ii. 317, 318. Bign. vi. 24, 25. Saalf. iii. 313.
Hard. ix. 322.

The situation of Blucher, with his cavalry and this slender body of infantry, was now altogether desperate. He was driven up to Rat Kau, in the extremity of Germany, on the very edge of the Danish territory, where a powerful body of troops was collected to prevent his entrance. In the night he received intelligence that Travemunde, a fortified town on the sea-coast, to which he proposed to have retired, had been taken by Murat, along with a battalion which he had sent forward to garrison that important post, where he hoped to have embarked; and to complete his misfortunes, information arrived in the morning that the salt marshes between Schwertau and that town were not passable by the army. At the same time a flag of truce arrived from Murat,

77.
He retires to Rat Kau, and is there made prisoner.

* The French writers make it a just reproach to the English army that its soldiers committed such disgraceful excesses at St Sebastian, Ciudad Rodrigo, and Badajoz, when these fortresses fell by assault. It is the duty of the historian to condemn equally such outrages, by whomsoever committed; and certainly in this work no veil shall be thrown over those atrocities when they come to be recounted. But it would be well if they would reserve a little of their humane indignation for the sufferers under their own soldiery on similar catastrophes. On this occasion, though they pass it lightly over, the cruelties and devastation committed by Bernadotte's and Soult's corps for two days after the town was taken, notwithstanding all the efforts of those marshals, were equal to the very worst deeds that ever stained the British arms.—See the frightful details, drawn with a graphic hand, in *Lettre de Villers à la Comtesse Fanny Beauharnais*, Amst. 1808.

CHAP.
XLIII.

1806.

¹ Dum. xvi.
333, 339.Jom. ii. 317,
319. Hard.

ix. 321, 322.

Saalf. iii. 313.

while his numerous squadrons had already driven the Prussian infantry out of Schwertau, and were closing in, in all directions, on his last position. Overcome by stern necessity, the hardy veteran, with tears in his eyes, agreed to a capitulation, in virtue of which all his troops laid down their arms. On this occasion were taken ten battalions and fifty-three squadrons, amounting to four thousand foot-soldiers, and three thousand seven hundred cavalry, with forty pieces of cannon, the remainder of his fine train of artillery having been left on the ramparts of Lubeck.¹

78.
Fall of Mag-
deburg.

To complete the disasters of the Prussian monarchy nothing was wanting but the surrender of Magdeburg; and that important bulwark was not long of falling into the hands of Marshal Ney. Although its garrison was in great part composed of fugitives of all regiments, who had made their escape into that asylum from the disastrous fields of Jena and Auerstadt, yet such was the strength of its works, and the ample store of provisions and magazines of all sorts which existed within its walls, that a prolonged defence might confidently have been anticipated. Nevertheless, if its fall was not quite so disgraceful as that of Stettin and Custrin, it was such as to affix a lasting stigma on the Prussian arms. After fifteen days of a blockade, Marshal Ney commenced operations in form; but before having recourse to the tedious method of regular approaches, he resolved to try the effect of a bombardment. Furnaces for this purpose were heated, and arrangements made to throw four-and-twenty pound shot, red-hot, into every part of the town, while a copious shower of bombs was prepared to bring terror and conflagration upon the inhabitants. It was not necessary, however, to proceed to these extremities. The citizens of Magdeburg preserved a vivid traditional recollection of the horrors which their forefathers underwent after the memorable storm by Count Tilly in 1631, when the whole town was reduced to ashes. No sooner, therefore, did the first flaming projectiles begin to descend upon their houses than they besieged General Kleist, the governor, with entreaties for a capitulation. That officer, deeming the Prussian monarchy destroyed, and seeing no use in singly prolonging a contest now become hopeless, agreed to a

Nov. 8.

capitulation on the same terms as Stettin, in virtue of which this important frontier town, the bulwark of the monarchy, with its redoubtable ramparts still untouched, and not even an outwork lost, containing twelve thousand troops in arms, and four thousand in hospital, six hundred pieces of cannon, eight hundred thousand pounds of powder, a pontoon train complete, and immense magazines of all sorts, fell into the hands of the enemy, who hardly mustered a greater force without its walls.¹

CHAP.
XLIII.

1806.

¹ Dum. xvi.
343, 347.
Jom. ii. 319.
Bign. vi. 26.
Saalf. iii. 313.

After these stunning calamities, it was not to be expected that the fortresses on the Weser, which were now left far in the rear of the storm of war, should long continue to hold out. A host of fugitives from Jena and Auerstadt had taken refuge in those strongholds, particularly Hameln and Neuburg; into the former of which General Lecocq, who had been separated in the confusion of the disastrous night which followed those battles, had thrown himself with four thousand men who still preserved a military array. There he speedily found himself blockaded by the forces of the King of Holland, who had advanced by Wurtzburg and Paderborn to the banks of the Weser. The disastrous state of the monarchy gave him too plausible a ground for assailing the fidelity of the besieged. "You are insulated," said he, "without hope of succour. Abandoned, and more than a hundred leagues in the rear of the victorious invaders, what can your efforts do to avert the fall of the Prussian monarchy?" These arguments, supported by the official intelligence of the fall of Magdeburg and the surrender of almost all the fragments of the army, produced the desired impression, and it was speedily agreed that the fortress should be evacuated, the private soldiers made prisoners, and the officers return on their parole to Prussia. A mutiny broke out among the soldiers upon learning the terms of this disgraceful capitulation; but it was speedily suppressed by Savary's dragoons, the men disarmed, and the fortress, in admirable condition, delivered over, with five thousand prisoners, to the French. Neuburg speedily followed the same example, and, with its untouched fortifications and garrison of three thousand men, capitulated to the victors; and with it all the elements of resistance expired between the Elbe and the Weser.²

79.

Fall of
Hameln and
Neuburg on
the Weser.

Nov. 20.

Nov. 25.

² Dum. xvi.
347, 351.
Bign. vi. 27.

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XLIII.

1806.

80.

Napoleon de-
taches Sax-
ony from the
coalition.

Oct. 17.

While the arms of Napoleon, guided by his penetrating eye, were reaping in this astonishing series of successes the fruits of the victories of Jena and Auerstadt, the Emperor himself, occupied alike with military and diplomatic objects, was preparing the means of further triumphs, and a more complete consolidation of the power which fortune and genius had thus combined to place at his disposal. His first care was to detach Saxony from the coalition; and after the defeat of its army in those disastrous days, and occupation of its territory by the conquerors, this was easily accomplished. The Saxons have a hereditary jealousy of the Prussians, by whom they have a presentiment they are one day to be swallowed up. Necessity, not inclination, had brought them into the field with their ambitious neighbours; and they gladly availed themselves of the first opportunity to range their forces on the side to which their secret inclinations had long pointed, and which seemed to be recommended alike by prudence and necessity. Early in the campaign, Napoleon had addressed to them a proclamation, in which he called on them to assert their national independence, and throw off that withering alliance with Prussia from which nothing but ultimate ruin was to be anticipated.* This address had already produced a great impression on the Saxon troops, when the victory of Jena seemed to dissolve at once the bonds which held the two nations together. Improving on these dispositions, Napoleon assembled the Saxon officers, three hundred in number, who had been made prisoners at Weimar, strongly represented to them the impolicy of any longer uniting

* "Saxons! the Prussians have invaded your territory. I have come to deliver you. They have violently dissolved the bond which united your troops, and incorporated them with their own ranks. You must, forsooth, shed your blood, not merely for interests foreign but adverse to those of your country! Saxons! your fate is now in your own hands. Will you float in uncertainty between those who impose and those who seek to liberate you from the yoke? My success will secure the independence of your country and your prince. The triumph of the Prussians would rivet on you eternal chains. To-morrow they will demand Lusatia; the day after, the right bank of the Elbe. But what do I say? Have they not already done so? Have they not long endeavoured to force your sovereign to recognise a feudal supremacy which would soon sweep you from the rank of independent nations? Your independence, your constitution, your liberty, would exist only in recollection, and the spirits of your ancestors, of the brave Saxons, would feel indignant at seeing you reduced, without resistance, by your rivals, to a slavery long prepared by their councils, and your country reduced to the rank of a Prussian province." None could descant more fluently than Napoleon on the withering effect to inconsiderable states of an alliance with a greater power; for none put it in force so invariably towards his own tributary states.—DUMAS, xvi. 205.

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1806.

their arms to those of their natural enemies the Prussians; and offered, upon their subscribing the oath tendered to them of fidelity to its fortunes, to admit them into the Confederation of the Rhine. Gladly the officers, for themselves and the troops under their command, subscribed the conditions; and immediately they were all, with the private soldiers, six thousand in number, sent back to Dresden. The Elector shortly after recalled the remainder of his forces from the Prussian standard; he accepted first neutrality, then an alliance with the conqueror; and before the war in Poland was concluded, his troops were to be seen actively engaged under the French eagles. Such was the origin of that intimate union which, down to the close of the war, subsisted between Napoleon and the Saxon government, and which, though in the end fraught with numberless calamities to that electorate, must ever command respect, from the fidelity with which its engagements were adhered to under adverse fortune.¹

¹ Dum. xvi.
204, 207.
Bign. vi. 3, 4.

It was shortly after having detached Saxony from the Prussian, and united it to his own alliance, that Napoleon received an answer from the King of Prussia to the elusory proposals of accommodation made by him before the battle of Jena, and which that unhappy monarch eagerly caught at after that disaster as the only light that seemed to break upon his sinking fortunes. The times, however, were not now the same: there was no longer any need of dissembling; the Prussian army was routed, and he was not the man to let slip the opportunity of completing its destruction. He therefore coldly replied, that it was premature to speak of peace when the campaign could hardly be said to have commenced; and that, having resolved to try the fate of arms, the King must abide by its issue.²

81.
Refuses to
treat with
Prussia.

Oct. 18.
² Dum. xvi.
236, 239.
Jom. ii. 301.

Following the march of his victorious armies, Napoleon continued his progress, by Weimar, Naumberg, Wittenberg, and Potsdam, towards Berlin. On the march he passed the field of Rosbach, the well-known theatre of the Prussian victory over the French, and ordered the column erected in commemoration of that triumph, which had been thrown down by the soldiers of his army, to be preserved from further injury, and transported as a trophy to Paris. At Potsdam he visited, with

82.
Napoleon
visits Pots-
dam and the
tomb of Fred-
erick.
Oct. 25.

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1806.

eager haste, the palace of Sans Souci and the tomb of the Great Frederick. Every thing in the apartments of the illustrious monarch had been preserved as when he breathed his last: the book which he read shortly before his death remained on the table; the furniture was untouched; the writing materials still there: the simplicity of all surprised the conqueror, who was accustomed to the magnificence of St Cloud. By a singular coincidence, but one of the many with which the history of Napoleon is full, he visited the sepulchre on the anniversary of the day on which Alexander, just a year before, on the same spot, had sworn fidelity to Frederick William. Such had been the confusion of the Prussian flight, that on the tomb there still remained the cordon of the black eagle, the scarf and sword of the hero, which he had worn in the Seven Years' War, as well as the standards of his guard. With generous emotion Napoleon approached the awful monument; but even at that solemn moment unworthy feelings gained the ascendancy. He himself seized the venerable relics, and sent them with indecent haste off to Paris. "I will make them a present," said he, "to the Hotel des Invalides: the old veterans of the Hanoverian war will receive with religious respect all that once belonged to one of the greatest captains of whom history has made mention." Such an act could not injure the dead; his glory was enshrined in imperishable lustre in the page of history: but it lowered the living, and sullied the triumph of Jena by an unbecoming act of rapacity. Little did Napoleon at that moment anticipate the advent of times so soon approaching, when the Prussians, now so humbled, were to have the mastery of his proudest trophies, and nought was to remain but veneration for the remains of the dead to protect his own ashes in a foreign and far distant land from the rude hand of the spoiler.^{1*}

¹ Bign. vi. 11,
12. Jom. ii.
302, 303.
Dum. xvi.
249, 250.

* How much more honourable as well as magnanimous was the conduct of the Russian officer who, instead of destroying the monument erected at Coblenz to commemorate the campaign of 1812, simply engraved below the inscription the words, "Seen and approved by the Russian governor of Cologne, January 1, 1814." It is for the interest of all nations to preserve the trophies of their enemy's victory and the remains of the dead from insult; for it is impossible to foresee how soon they may themselves suffer from an opposite system. Nor is

This interesting episode did not interrupt for a moment the military movements of the corps immediately around the person of the Emperor. The same weakness and infatuation appeared there as elsewhere to have seized the Prussian authorities. On the same day Marshal Davoust, agreeably to the promise of Napoleon, headed the splendid vanguard which, with all the pomp of war, entered Berlin. No words can describe the mingled feelings of rage, astonishment, and despair, which animated the inhabitants at this heart-rending spectacle, occurring in less than a fortnight after hostilities had commenced. With speechless grief they gazed on the proud array which defiled through their gates, and drank deep, in the agony of that dreadful moment, of the punishment for the political sins of their government during the last ten years. On the same day the strong fortress of Spandau, with its impregnable citadel and a garrison of twelve hundred men, surrendered, without firing a shot, to Marshal Lannes;* and Napoleon, after inspecting that stronghold, on the day following made his triumphal entry into the capital. He had not the same delicacy towards the feelings of its inhabitants which he had previously evinced towards those of Vienna; the palace of Charlottenberg would have answered his purpose of a residence as well as that of Schoenbrun had done; but he was anxious to lacerate the feelings of the Prussians as much as he had been to spare those of the Austrians, and punish ten years of subservience and ten days of warfare more than he had done the inveterate hostility of twelve campaigns. Surrounded,

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1806.

83.

Berlin, Spandau, and Charlottenberg occupied by the French.
Oct. 25.

Oct. 26.

Oct. 27.

such forbearance without its reward. It obliterates the disgrace of defeat in the magnanimity of subsequent victory. The Pillar of Austerlitz, in the Place Vendôme, is now a monument not less to German generosity than French valour. It would be well for the memory of Napoleon if more instances of moderation in victory and regard for the vanquished were mingled with his military triumphs.

* Napoleon spoke thus of this fortress:—"The citadel of Spandau, situated on the Spree, fully victualled for two months, is an inestimable acquisition. In our hands it could sustain two months of open trenches. But such was the general confusion that the batteries were not even armed."—19th Bulletin. It is evident that treachery, or selfishness equivalent to treachery, occasioned the sudden fall of so many of the Prussian fortresses at this period; and Bignon tells us that he became convinced of that when, on being sent by the Emperor to superintend the capitulation of Spandau, he found the governor, Benckendorf, occupied with no other consideration but disputes with the French commander as to some wretched culinary articles which he alleged the capitulation authorised him to remove!—BIGNON, vi. 13.

CHAP.
XLIII.

1806.

¹ Dum. xvi.
250, 252.
Bign. vi. 13.
Hard. ix. 313.

therefore, by all the splendour of the empire, in the midst of a brilliant staff, and preceded by his dragoon guards, he made his triumphal entry under the arch erected to the honour of the Great Frederick, and, advancing through an innumerable crowd, in whom passion, admiration, and wonder were mingled in some cases with joy, he proceeded through the streets, and alighted at the gates of the old palace.¹

84.
Affair of
Prince Hatzfeld.

Prince Hatzfeld, one of the leaders of the war party, in the total absence of any authority emanating from the King, had been besought by the principal inhabitants to take an interim direction of affairs, and assume the command of the burgher guard. In doing so he had issued a proclamation, in which he said, "Nothing remains for us now but to assume a pacific attitude: our cares should not extend beyond what is within our own walls: that constitutes our sole interest, and as it is of the highest importance, we should bestow our exclusive attention upon it." This prince, as the chief of the pacific authorities, presented himself at the head of the magistrates before Napoleon at Potsdam, and was well received. He again waited on him when he arrived at the palace; but the conqueror received him with a severe air, and averting his head said, "Do not present yourself before me; I have no need of your services; retire to your estates." Shortly after the astonished nobleman withdrew, he was ordered to be arrested by orders of Napoleon, who had commanded him to be seized *and executed* before six o'clock that evening. In fact he had transmitted to Prince Hohenlohe a letter, containing military details in regard to what he had seen at Potsdam when waiting on Napoleon, which had been intercepted by Davoust and brought to the Emperor. The imperious commands of the conqueror left his subordinate authorities no alternative but submission; although Berthier, shocked at the deed of violence which was in contemplation, did his utmost to avert the storm, and even refused to write out the warrant, which Rapp was called in to do.² He could not, however, prevent Napoleon from ordering another murder as atrocious as that of the Duc d'Enghien, and the

² Rapp, 109,
110. Hard.
ix. 315.

death-warrant was signed, and ordered to be sent by Rapp to Davoust for immediate execution.

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1806.

The former brave and generous man, at his own imminent hazard, took upon himself to delay its transmission; and in the mean time the Princess of Hatzfeld, having arrived in the antechamber of the palace, was informed of the danger of her husband, and sank in a swoon on the floor. Rapp advised her, after she recovered, to endeavour to throw herself in Napoleon's way at the hotel of Prince Ferdinand, where he was going in a short time; she did so, and fell at his feet in the extremity of despair. Her grief and beauty touched Napoleon, who, though subject to violent fits of passion, was not insensible to generous emotions. Rapp warmly seconded the return to feelings of humanity, and orders were despatched to Davoust to suspend the execution till further directions. Meanwhile the Princess was enjoined to repair to the palace, whither Napoleon soon after returned. He ordered her to be brought into the room which he occupied. "Your husband," said he with a benign air, "has brought himself into a distressing situation; according to our laws he has incurred the penalty of death. General Rapp, give me the letter: take it, read it, madam. Is it your husband's writing?" She did so, trembling. "I cannot deny his subscription," she replied, almost fainting with emotion. Napoleon then took it from her, tore it, and threw it into the fire. "I have no longer any proof; your husband is pardoned." He then desired Rapp to bring him back immediately from Davoust's headquarters: that officer ventured to admit that he had not even sent him there: the Emperor manifested no displeasure, but on the contrary seemed gratified at the delay which had taken place in the execution of the order.¹*

85.
His pardon
by Napoleon.

¹ Rapp, 109,
110. Bign. vi.
14. Hard. ix.
315.

* It is always pleasing to record a generous action, and doubly so when it occurs in an enemy; but justice compels the admission, that by delaying the transmission of this order Rapp conferred a greater favour on Napoleon than on the intended victim of his passion: for the one he saved only from death, the other from the guilt of murder. Rapp informs us that the Prince of Hatzfeld had come to Potsdam on the 25th, and it was for the account transmitted to Hohenlohe on that day of what he there saw that he was about to be condemned. The 25th was the day on which Davoust entered Berlin. The information objected to was collected, and the letter written, therefore, before the Prince had come under the military government of the French Emperor. There is no law against a private citizen, or a civic authority of one nation, transmitting to

CHAP.
XLIII.

1806.

86.

Napoleon's
proclamation
and addresses
to his sol-
diers.
Oct. 30.

Shortly after his arrival at Berlin, Napoleon paid a visit of condolence to Prince Ferdinand, brother of the great King of Prussia, and father of Prince Louis who fell at Saalfeld, and manifested the most delicate attentions to the widow of Prince Henry, as well as the Princess Electoral of Hesse Cassel. At the same time he addressed an animated proclamation to his troops, in which he recounted with just pride their astonishing exploits, and promised to lead them against the Russians, who, he foretold, would find another Austerlitz in the heart of Prussia.* Next day he reviewed the corps of Marshal Davoust on the road to Frankfort, and, assembling the officers in a circle, assured them of the admiration which he felt for their achievements, and the grief which he had experienced at the numerous losses which had thinned their ranks. "Sire," answered the marshal, "the soldiers of the third corps will ever be to you what the tenth legion was to Cæsar." Already, in the emulation of the different corps, the mutual knowledge and attachment of the officers and men, were to be found the happy effects of that permanent organisation into separate armies and divisions, which, first of the moderns,¹

¹ Dum. xvi.
259, 261.

² Sav. ii. 112,
113. Ante,
chap. xl. § 116.
³ Ante, chap.
xxv. § 72;
and Corresp.
Confid. de Na-
poleon, iv. 199,
201.

its military officers details which have come to his knowledge regarding an enemy, when not yet subject to their authority—Napoleon himself called on the French prefects and magistrates to do so a hundred times. If the circumstance of Hatzfeld having collected and transmitted this information, while on a civil mission to the Emperor at Potsdam, exposed him to the penalty of death, what is to be said to Savary the year before, who, by orders of Napoleon, when conferring with the Emperor Alexander on the proposed terms of accommodation, obtained and brought to him military details of inestimable importance in regard to the temper and strength of the allied army on the eve of the battle of Austerlitz;² or to Napoleon himself, who, in 1797, transmitted orders to his brother Joseph, when holding the sacred office of ambassador at Rome, to do all in his power to revolutionise the Eternal City, and overturn the Papal authority.³ What the Prince of Hatzfeld did was no more than all ambassadors do, and which Napoleon invariably required from all his diplomatic agents. The character of the intended transaction may be judged of by what Berthier, with generous warmth, said on the occasion—"Your majesty will surely not shoot a man connected with the first families in Berlin for so trifling a thing: the supposition is impossible—you will not do so;" and from his positive refusal to write out the order, as well as from Rapp's delaying its transmission. Had the Prince been shot, it would have been, like the death of the Duc d'Enghien and the bookseller Palm—an act of deliberate murder. History, therefore, cannot award to Napoleon the praise of having pardoned, on this occasion, a criminal who had forfeited his life either by the laws of war or the principles of justice; but it must not refuse the meed due to a conqueror who returns to generous feelings, after having been led, in a moment of irritation, to the command of an atrocious deed; and joyfully seizes on this incident as illustrative of that ascendancy which, in his cooler moments, humane feelings obtained over ruthless passion in the mind of this extraordinary man.—RAPP, 108.

* "Soldiers! you are worthy defenders of my crown, and of the great people. As long as you are animated with your present spirit nothing can resist you.

Napoleon had imitated from the ancient conquerors of the world.

CHAP.
XLIII.

1806.

87.

Unpardon-
able severity
of Napoleon
to the Duke
of Brunswick.

While Napoleon and his followers were thus indulging in an excusable pride at the retrospect of their wonderful achievements, the Prussian officers who had traversed the country, or reached the capital in virtue of the several capitulations which had been granted, were exposed to the most grievous humiliation. The officers of the guard, especially, who had escaped from the wreck of Hohenlohe's corps, were ostentatiously marched by the Emperor through Berlin to Spandau. Words cannot describe the mortification of those high-spirited young men, at the unparalleled calamities in which their inconsiderate passions had involved their country; wherever they went crowds beset their steps, some lamenting their sufferings, others reproaching them as the authors of all the public misfortunes. Napoleon made a severe and ungenerous use of his victory. The old Duke of Brunswick, respectable from his age, his achievements under the Great Frederick, and the honourable wounds he had recently received on the field of battle, and who had written a letter to Napoleon, after the battle of Jena, recommending his subjects to his generosity, was in an especial manner the object of invective. His states were overrun, and the official bulletins disgraced by a puerile tirade against a general who had done nothing but discharge his duty to his sovereign. For this he was punished by the total confiscation of his dominions.¹ So virulent was the language employed, and such the apprehensions in consequence inspired, that the wounded general was compelled,

¹ Bign. vi.
15, 33, 34.
Camp. de
Saxe, ii. 155,
295.

Behold the result of your labours! One of the first powers in Europe, which recently had the audacity to propose to us a shameful capitulation, is annihilated. The forests and defiles of Franconia, the Saale, the Elbe, which our fathers would not have traversed in seven years, we have surmounted in seven days, besides, during the same period, fighting four combats and a great battle. We have arrived at Potsdam and Berlin sooner than the renown of our victories! We have made sixty thousand prisoners, taken sixty-five standards, including those of the royal guards, six hundred pieces of cannon, three fortresses, twenty generals, while half the army regret their not having had an opportunity of firing a shot. All the Prussian provinces, from the Elbe to the Oder, are in our hands. Soldiers! the Russians boast that they are advancing to meet us: let us march to encounter them; we will spare them the half of their journey; they will find an Austerlitz in the heart of Prussia. A nation which has so speedily forgot the generosity which we manifested towards it after the battle when its Emperor, its court, the wreck of its army, owed its safety entirely to the capitulation which we granted to it, is a nation that will never be able to contend with us."—DUMAS, xvi. 259, 260.

CHAP.
XLIII.

1806.

88.

And to the
Queen of
Prussia, and
the Elector of
Hesse Cassel.

with great personal suffering, to take refuge in Altona, where he soon after died. *

The Queen, whose spirit in prosperous and constancy in adverse fortune had justly endeared her to her subjects, and rendered her the admiration of all Europe, was pursued in successive bulletins with unmanly sarcasms ; and a heroic princess, whose only fault, if fault it was, had been an excess of patriotic ardour, was compared to Helen, whose faithless vices had involved her country in the calamities consequent on the siege of Troy.† The whole dominions of the Elector of Hesse Cassel were next seized ; and that prince, who had not even combated at Jena, but merely permitted, when he could not prevent, the entry of the Prussians into his dominions, was dethroned and deprived of all his possessions. Animosity to England was the secret motive for all those acts of robbery. So strongly was Napoleon influenced by these feelings that he made no attempt to disguise that it was the ruling

* “ If the Duke of Brunswick,” said the Bulletin, “ has richly deserved the animadversion of the French people, he has also incurred that of the Prussian army and people ; of the latter, who reproach him as one of the authors of the war ; of the former, who complain of his manœuvres and military conduct. The false calculations of the young may be pardoned, but the conduct of that old Prince, aged seventy-two, is an excess of insanity, and his catastrophe can excite no regret. What can there be respectable in gray hairs, when to the faults of age are united the inconsideration and folly of youth ? For these extravagancies he has justly incurred the forfeiture of all his dominions.”—23d and 27th *Bulletins, Camp. de Saxe*, ii. 216, 293.

† “ All the world accuses the Queen as the author of all the calamities which have befallen the Prussian nation. The public indignation is at its height against the authors of the war, especially Gentz, a miserable scribbler, who sells himself for money. After her ridiculous journey to Erfurth and Weimar, the Queen entered Berlin a fugitive and alone. Among the standards we have taken are those embroidered by the hands of this princess, whose beauty has been as fatal to her people as that of Helen was to the citizens of Troy.”—27th and 23d *Bulletins, Camp. de Saxe*, ii. 215. It is worthy of observation, that M. Gentz, who is here stigmatised as a miserable hireling sold to England, was one of the most distinguished writers of the age, and one with whom Sir James Mackintosh, the eloquent apologist of the French Revolution, maintained a constant and valued correspondence down to the time of his death. That distinguished author, in reply to a letter from Gentz, which he received at Bombay, where he then was holding a high judicial appointment, thus speaks of the pamphlet to which Napoleon alluded :—“ I received by the mail your two precious fragments. I assent to all you say, sympathise with all you feel, and admire equally your reason and your eloquence throughout your masterly fragment. I have read your letter fifty times since I received it, with the same sentiment which a Roman in the extremity of Mauritania would have felt, if he had received an account of the ruin of his country after the battle of Pharsalia, written the morning after that calamity, with the unconquerable spirit of Cato, and the terrible energy of Tacitus. He would have exulted that there was something which Cæsar could not subdue, and from which a deliverer and avenger might yet spring.”—MACKINTOSH’S *Memoirs*, i. 304. Certainly, of all the unaccountable peculiarities in the mind of Napoleon, the most extraordinary is his total insensibility to the ultimate ascendant of truth over falsehood, and the extent to which he calculated on palming off falsehood and misrepresentation on the credulity or ignorance of mankind.

principle which governed all his measures towards the vanquished.* The Prince of Orange, brother-in-law to the King of Prussia, in favour of whom the Prussian plenipotentiaries then at Berlin made the strongest representations, shared the same fate: while to the nobles of Berlin he used publicly the cruel expression, more withering to his own reputation than theirs,—“*I will render that noblesse so poor that they shall be obliged to beg their bread.*” When a conqueror, in the midst of his greatest triumphs, uses such insulting language to the vanquished, and makes such an atrocious use of his victory, it is impossible to sympathise with his fall, and Waterloo and St Helena are felt to be a just measure of moral retribution.¹

¹ Bign. vi. 15, 33, 34, 23d and 27th Bulletins. Camp. de Saxe, ii. 155, 195, 214.

“Nescia mens hominum fati sortisque futuræ,
Et servare modum rebus, sublata secundis.
Turno tempus erit, magno quum optaverit emptum
Intactum Pallanta, et quum spolia ista diemque
Oderit.” †

Meanwhile the French armies, without any further resistance, took possession of the whole country between the Rhine and the Oder; and in the rear of the victorious bands appeared, in severity unprecedented even in the revolutionary armies, the dismal scourge of contributions. Resolved to maintain the war exclusively on the provinces which were to be its theatre, Napoleon had taken only twenty-four thousand francs in specie across the Rhine in the military chest of the army. It soon appeared from whom the deficiency was to be supplied. On the day after the battle of Jena appeared a proclamation, directing the levy of an extraordinary war contribution of one hundred and fifty-nine million francs (£6,300,000) on the countries at war with France, of which one hundred million was to be borne by the

89.
Enormous contributions levied on Prussia and the north of Germany.

* M. Bignon, who was present on the occasion, gives the following curious account of the conversation which led to the dethronement of the Elector of Hesse Cassel:—“Duroc and I said every thing we could during breakfast in favour of the Elector. He only petitioned to be allowed to resume possession of his estates; his fortresses were all to be ceded to the French arms; his troops, twelve thousand strong, were to be joined to their forces, and a heavy contribution paid. These offers appeared to make a considerable impression on the Emperor, especially the offer of so many troops; but after musing a while, he said abruptly, ‘Bah! Brunswick, Nassau, Cassel: all these princes are essentially English; they will never be our friends,’—and instantly set out for a review. Two days afterwards appeared the 27th bulletin, containing the announcement of their dethronement.”—See BIGNON, vi. 35.

† VIRGIL, *Æneid*, x. 500.

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1806.

Prussian states to the west of the Vistula, twenty-five million by the Elector of Saxony, and the remainder by the lesser states in the Prussian confederacy. This enormous burden, equivalent to at least £12,000,000 sterling, if the difference between the value of the money in England and Germany is taken into account, was levied with unrelenting severity; and the rapacity and exactions of the French agents employed in its collection aggravated to a very great degree the weight and odious nature of the imposition. Saxony, in the scourging contributions with which she was overwhelmed, had soon abundant cause to regret the French alliance; while Berlin, as well as the Hanoverian and Prussian states which had been occupied, experienced, in the rapacity of General Clarke and his subordinate agents, all the bitterness as well as the humiliation of conquest.¹

¹ Hard. ix.
317. Bign.
vi. 51, 53.
Bour. vii.
219.

90.
Cruelties
exercised to-
wards the
conquered
districts.

Nor was this all. The whole civil authorities who remained in the abandoned provinces were compelled to take an oath of fidelity to the French Emperor,*—an unprecedented step, which clearly indicated the intention of annexing the Prussian dominions to the great nation; while General Clarke, governor of Berlin, acting towards the magistrates as if they were already its subjects, barbarously shot a burgomaster of the town of Kirgitz, whose only fault was that he had, when destitute of any armed force, been unable to resist the abstraction of the arms of the burgher guard and local militia by Colonel Schill, who commanded a flying detachment that still, in the open country, maintained its fidelity to the colours of the monarchy.† Even the highest authorities gave way to the indiscriminate passion for pillage: “the name of General Clarke,” says Bourrienne, “became justly odious from every species of exaction, and a servile execution of all the orders of Napoleon;”² while the great reputation of the conqueror of Auerstadt was disgraced by the

² Hard. ix.
317. Bign.
vi. 51, 53.
Dum. xvii.
40, 49. Bour.
vii. 219.

* The oath was in these terms:—“I swear to exercise with fidelity the authority which is committed to me by the Emperor of the French, and to act only for the maintenance of the public tranquillity, and to concur with all my power in the execution of all the measures which may be ordered for the service of the French army, and to maintain no correspondence with its enemies.”—BIGN. vi. 51.

† At a dinner given by Louis XVIII. in 1815, to the King of Prussia, this murder became the subject of conversation. “Sire,” said Clarke, then Duke of Feltre, “it was an unhappy error.”—“Say, rather, an unworthy crime!” replied the indignant monarch.—HARD. ix. 318.

pillage of the noble library at Tempelberg, the country seat of Baron Hardenberg, minister of state, which took place by his authority, while he was in person occupying the edifice.

CHAP.
XLIII.
1806.

These evils, great as they were, and disgraceful to the arms and generals of France, were, however, in the ordinary case, only transitory; but it soon became evident that in the case of Prussia and the adjoining states they were to be permanent, and that the iron grasp of the conqueror was to be not only laid, but retained, on the north of Germany. Early in November there appeared an elaborate ordinance, which provided for the complete civil organisation and military occupation of the whole country from the Rhine to the Vistula. By this decree the conquered states were divided into four departments; those of Berlin, of Magdeburg, of Stettin, and of Custrin; the military and civil government of the whole conquered territory was intrusted to a governor-general at Berlin, having under him eight commanders of provinces into which it was divided. Receivers-general were appointed in each province, charged with collecting its whole revenue and all the war contributions imposed on it, and their transmission to the French governors. Magistrates, police, gendarmes, all were nominated by the authorities of Napoleon; the whole civil and military government of the country was concentrated in his hands. Clarke was governor-general, aided in the details of government by Count Daru, whose great capacity soon appeared in the admirable order which he introduced into every branch of the administration, and which would have been worthy of the highest admiration if it had not been rendered instrumental to the most cruel and universal system of public extortion. The same system of government was extended to the duchy of Brunswick, the states of Hesse and Hanover, the duchy of Mecklenburg, and the Hanse Towns, including Hamburg, which was speedily oppressed by grievous contributions, in exacting which the Dutch generals and troops were peculiarly conspicuous. The Emperor openly announced his determination to retain possession of all these states till England consented to his demands on the subject of the liberty of the seas. Careful, at the same time, to mingle

91.
Military
organisation
of the coun-
try from the
Rhine to the
Vistula.
Nov. 3.

CHAP.
XLIII.

1806.

¹ Dum. xvii.
54, 61. Bign.
vi. 72. Bour.
vii. 217, 219.

with these important civil changes such deeds as might captivate the imaginations of his subjects, he paraded before the deputation which came to Berlin from the senate of Paris, to congratulate him on his victories, three hundred and forty grenadiers of his Imperial Guard, each bearing a standard taken from the enemy in this short campaign—the most splendid display of military trophies seen in Europe since the triumphs of the Roman generals.¹

92.
Negotiations
with Prussia,
and the de-
mands of
Napoleon at
first acceded
to.

Meanwhile the negotiations for the conclusion of a separate peace between France and Prussia were resumed; the misfortunes of the King rendered it almost indispensable that a respite should be obtained on any terms, while it was not less advantageous for Napoleon to reap at once the fruits of his triumphs without undergoing the fatigues and dangers of a winter campaign in the frozen plains of Poland. Plenipotentiaries accordingly were appointed on both sides: on that of France, Duroc; on that of Prussia, MM. Lucchesini and Rastrow. There was no need of lengthened conferences; the situation of the parties gave to the one the power of demanding whatever he pleased, and deprived the other of that of withholding any thing which was required. Napoleon insisted that Prussia should renounce all the provinces she possessed between the Rhine and the Elbe, pay a contribution of a hundred millions of francs for the expenses of the war, cease to take any concern in the affairs of Germany, and recognise in the princes of the Confederation of the Rhine whatever titles the conqueror chose to confer upon them. Not daring to refuse these conditions, and yet unwilling to take upon themselves the responsibility of making so great a sacrifice, the Prussian envoys referred the matter to the King or his cabinet. They returned an answer agreeing to all the exactions which were required; but in the interval matters had essentially changed for the worse, the wreck of the Prussian armies had been almost totally destroyed, and the demands of Napoleon rose in proportion.²

Oct. 27.
² Bign. vi.
48, 49.
Lucches. ii.
182, 186.
Martens, viii.
537.

Perpetually haunted by the idea that it was the influence of England which he required to combat, and that the northern powers were brought into the field only to maintain her cause, he next insisted that the

Prussian troops should retire entirely to Königsberg and the small portion of the monarchy which lies to the east of the Vistula; that Colberg, Dantzic, Graudentz, Thorn, Glogau, Breslau, Hameln, and Neuburg, should be placed in the hands of the French; and that no foreign troops should be suffered to enter any part of the Prussian territory.* In agreeing to terms so ruinous to the monarchy, the Prussian plenipotentiaries could hardly expect that the King would ratify them; but so desperate had its affairs now become, that it was of importance to obtain a delay even of a few days, in the departure of Napoleon for Posen, in order to gain time for the arrival of the Russian troops on the Vistula. They signed the convention at Charlottenburg accordingly, stipulating only for its ratification by the King of Prussia. In fact, however, no hope remained to either side that it would lead to a permanent accommodation; for a few days before the truce was concluded, Talleyrand openly announced to the Prussian plenipotentiaries that they must look for no restitution of his conquests by the Emperor Napoleon, and that the vast territory from the Rhine to the Vistula would be retained until a general peace, as a means of compelling England to surrender its maritime acquisitions, and Russia to evacuate the principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia, which had recently been invaded by its arms. Thus the unhappy Prussian monarchy was made responsible for the ambition or successes of other powers over whose measures it had no sort of control; and the negotiations at Berlin, diverging from their original object, were degenerating into a mere manifesto of implacable hostility against the cabinets of London and St Petersburg.¹

The severity of the terms demanded, as well as their express assurances that no concessions, how great soever, could lead to a separate accommodation, as Napoleon was resolved to retain all his conquests until a general

CHAP.
XLIII.

1806.

93.

Convention
signed by the
plenipoten-
tiaries.

Nov. 16.

¹ Dum. xvii.
66, 67.
Bign. vi. 48,
49. Lucches.
ii. 182, 185,
186. Mar-
tens, viii. 537.

* "He was persuaded," says the Marquis Lucchesini, "that it was the intrigues of England which had arrayed the northern courts against France, which had brought about the refusal of the Emperor Alexander to ratify the treaty of Paris, and pushed forward Prussia into the field of battle. It was England, therefore, which it had become necessary to strike in Prussia; and it was on the conduct of the cabinet of London, in regard to the restitution of conquests, that the Emperor announced he would measure his own steps for the future fate of the Prussian monarchy."—LUCCHESINI, ii. 176, 177; BIGNON, vi. 44.

CHAP.
XLIH.

1806.

94.
Which the
King of
Prussia re-
fuses to ratify.

Nov. 28.

1 Dum. xvii.
69, 71.
Lucches. ii.
223, 225.
Bign. vi. 48,
49.95.
Famous Ber-
lin decree
against Eng-
lish com-
merce.

peace, led, as might have been expected, to the rupture of the negotiations. Desperate as the fortunes of Prussia were, what was to be gained by the cession of three-fourths of its dominions, and its fortresses still unsubdued on the Vistula, to the French? Reft as he was of his kingdom and his army, the King still preserved his honour, and nobly resolved to continue faithful to his engagements. He declined, therefore, to ratify the armistice, which was presented to him at Osterode for signature on the part of France, by Duroc, and at the same time published a melancholy but noble proclamation, in which, without attempting to disguise his hopes or conceal the deplorable state of his affairs, he rose superior to the storms of fortune, and declared his resolution to stand or fall with the Emperor of Russia.* This refusal was anticipated by Napoleon. It reached him at Posen, whither he had advanced on his road to the Vistula; and nothing remained but to enter vigorously on the prosecution of the war in Poland.¹

To this period of the war belongs the famous Berlin decree of the 21st November against the commerce of Great Britain. But that subject is too vast to be adequately touched on in the close of a chapter embracing such a variety of objects as the present; and it will be fully enlarged on in a subsequent one, which will include also the Milan decree which followed in 1807, the continental system, and the Orders of Council adopted as a measure of retaliation by the British government.

Napoleon set out from Berlin for the Vistula soon

* "Matters," said the proclamation, "had arrived at that pass, that Prussia could no longer hope to obtain peace, even at the price of the greatest sacrifices. It was not in his power to make the Russian forces retrograde, since already their own frontiers were menaced. The Emperor of France has shown a determination, even when he acceded to the basis of a negotiation, not to suspend for one moment his military operations; and he has protracted the conferences till his successes enabled him to declare that the conquest of Prussia should afford him the means of dictating peace to England and Russia. Compelled thus to resume hostilities, the King is not without hopes of yet bringing them to a successful issue. He hopes that the governors of the fortresses on the Vistula will not imitate the weakness of those on the Oder and Elbe, and all the disposable forces of the monarchy will hasten to unite their colours on the Vistula and the Warta to the brave Russian battalions. Such a proof of courage and constancy is not new to the Prussian nation. In the Seven Years' War the capital and provinces were also occupied by the enemy; but the firmness and intrepidity of the nation brought it safe through all its perils, and excited alike the admiration and astonishment of posterity. Then Prussia combated alone the greatest powers of Europe; now the powerful and magnanimous Alexander is about to take his place by her side with all the forces of his vast empire. Their cause is the same; they will stand or fall together."—Dum. xvii. 70, 71.

after he had fulminated this anathema against English commerce, and at Posen, in Prussian Poland, gave audience to the deputies of that unhappy kingdom, who came to implore his support to the remains of its once mighty dominion. His words were calculated to excite hopes which his subsequent conduct never realised: "France," said he, "has never recognised the partitions of Poland; but, nevertheless, I cannot proclaim your independence until you are resolved to defend your rights as a nation at every sacrifice, even that of life itself. The world reproaches you with having, in your continual civil dissensions, lost sight of the true interests and safety of your country. Taught by your misfortunes, now unite, and prove to the world that the same spirit animates the whole Polish nation." Universal acclamations attended his arrival at Posen; all the population advanced to meet his carriage; four magnificent triumphal arches were erected to the victor of Rivoli, Marengo, Austerlitz, and Jena. Count Palatine Radzerminski, at the head of the deputation from Great Poland, addressed him in terms of Eastern adulation, mingled with strange expressions, which proved prophetic; "The universe knows your exploits and your triumphs; the west beheld the first development of your genius; the south was the recompense of your labours; the east became to you an object of admiration; *the north will be the term of your victories*. The Polish race, yet groaning under the yoke of the Germanic nations, humbly implores your august highness to raise up its remnant from the dust."—Napoleon replied, "That which has been destroyed by force cannot be restored except by force. I would with pleasure behold the independence of Poland restored, and a barrier formed by its strength against the unbounded ambition of Russia; but petitions and discourses will not achieve this work; and unless the whole nation, including nobles, priests, and burghers, unites and embraces the firm resolution to conquer or die, success is hopeless. With such a determination it is certain; and you may always rely on my powerful protection."¹

While the main body of the French army was advancing by rapid strides from the Oder to the Vistula,

CHAP.
XLIII.

1806.

96.

Affairs of
Poland. Na-
poleon's
language to
the Polish
deputies.

Nov. 29.

¹ Dum. xvii.
60, 64.

CHAP.
XLIII.

1806.

97.

Advance of
Jerome into
Silesia, of the
French army
to the Vis-
tula, and
Mortier to
Hamburg.

Dec. 8.

Napoleon, ever anxious to secure his communications, and clear his rear of hostile bodies, caused two different armies to advance to support the flanks of the invading force. To Jerome Buonaparte, who commanded the ninth corps, consisting of twenty-five thousand Bavarians and Wirtemburghers, and who had Vandamme for his adviser, was intrusted the difficult task of reducing the six fortresses of Silesia, Glogau, Breslau, Brieg, Niesse, Schweidnitz, and Glatz, containing in all a force nearly equal to his own. Glogau, however, with its garrison of three thousand men, made but a show of resistance, and, early in December, fell into the hands of the French. The other bulwarks of the province exhibited more determination, and operations in form were commenced against them. Mortier, on the extreme left, was intrusted with the subjugation of Hanover and the Hanse Towns, and the occupation of Hamburg, which was accomplished with hardly any resistance. Having done this, he advanced to observe Stralsund and the Swedes; while a fresh reserve was collecting on the Elbe, under the command of Louis, King of Holland. Thus, though the Grand Army was advancing by rapid strides to the shores of the Vistula, its flanks on either side were protected by subordinate corps; and fresh forces, stationed in échelon in the rear, overawed the intermediate states, and kept up the communication with the Rhine. The whole of the north of Germany was overrun by French troops, while a hundred thousand were assembling to meet the formidable legions of Russia in the heart of Poland.¹

¹ Bign. vi.
69, 71. Dum.
xvii. 50, 53.

98.

Levy of a new
conscription
in France.
Dec. 5.

Vast as the forces of Napoleon were, such prodigious efforts over so great an extent of surface rendered fresh supplies indispensable. The senate at Paris was ready to furnish them; and on the requisition of the Emperor, eighty thousand were voted from the youth who were to arrive at the military age in 1807. "In what more triumphant circumstances," said the Emperor, "can we call on the youth of France to flock to our standards? They will have to traverse, in joining their comrades, the capital of their enemies, and fields of battle illustrated by immortal victories." It may easily be conceived with what transports this appeal was received by a nation so

passionately attached to military glory as the French, and the Emperor resolved to turn it to the best account. Not content with this great addition to his prospective resources, he instituted corps of volunteers to receive the numerous and enthusiastic youth, whom even the conscription could not drain off in sufficient numbers; additional battalions were added to the Imperial Guard; the troops of Hesse taken in a body into French pay, and the most energetic measures adopted to augment as much as possible the military resources of the Confederation of the Rhine. Detailed instructions were at the same time transmitted to Marmont in Illyria, and the Viceroy Eugene Beauharnais, to have their forces disposed on the Austrian monarchy in the most advantageous position; the King of Bavaria was informed by the Emperor himself of all that he should do for the defence of his dominions, and the activity displayed in the fortresses on the Adige, the Isonzo, and the Inn, looked as if he was making preparations rather for a defensive struggle in the plains of Bavaria, or the fields of Italy, than for a decisive stroke at Russia on the shores of the Vistula.¹

¹ Bign. vi. 69, 71. Dum. xvii. 50, 55. See the orders in Dum. xvii. Pièces Just.

A treaty, offensive and defensive, between Saxony and France was the natural result of these successes. This convention, arranged by Talleyrand, was signed at Posen, on the 12th December. It stipulated that the Elector of Saxony should be elevated to the dignity of king; he was admitted into the Confederation of the Rhine, and his contingent fixed at twenty thousand men. By a separate article, it was provided that the passage of foreign troops across the kingdom of Saxony should take place without the consent of the sovereign: a provision which sufficiently pointed it out as a military outpost of the great nation—while, by a subsidiary treaty, signed at Posen three days afterwards, the whole minor princes of the House of Saxony were also admitted into the Confederacy.²

99. Treaty between France and Saxony.

Dec. 15.
² Dum. xvii. 88, 89. Martens, viii. 552, and 555.

Such was the astonishing campaign of Jena, the most marvellous of all the achievements of Napoleon; that in which success the most unheard-of attended his steps, and his force appeared most irresistible to the bewildered nations. Europe had hardly recovered the shock arising from the fall of Austria in three months, during the campaign of Austerlitz, when she beheld Prussia overthrown

100. Immense results of the campaign.

CHAP
XLIII.

1806.

¹ Jom. ii.
325.

in as many weeks by the shock of Jena. Without halting one day before the forces of the enemy, without ever once pausing in the career of conquest, the French troops had marched from the Rhine to the Vistula; the fabric reared with so much care by the wisdom and valour of Frederick the Great, had fallen by a single blow; and one of the chief powers of Christendom had disappeared at once from the theatre of Europe. Three hundred and fifty standards, four thousand pieces of cannon, six first-rate fortresses, eighty thousand prisoners, had been taken in less than seven weeks; of a noble array of a hundred and twenty thousand men, who had so lately crowded on the banks of the Saale, not more than fifteen thousand now followed the standards of the King to the shores of the Vistula.¹ Results so astonishing were altogether unprecedented in modern Europe: they recalled rather the classic exploits of Cæsar or Alexander, or the fierce incursions of Timour or Genghis Khan, than any thing yet experienced in Christendom. But they possessed this superiority above the achievements of antiquity or the sanguinary conquests of modern barbarism, that it was not over inexperienced tribes or enervated nations that the triumphs had been won, but the most warlike nation of the civilised world that had been overthrown, and the army which had not long before withstood the banded strength of Europe which had been dissolved.

101.
Talents and
rashness displayed
by
Napoleon
during the
campaign.

The talents displayed by Napoleon in this campaign, though of a very high order, were not equal to the transcendent abilities evinced at Ulm and Austerlitz. Doubtless the celerity with which the hazardous advance of the Duke of Brunswick across the Thuringian Forest to turn the French left and interpose between the Rhine and their army, was turned to the best account, and the Prussians cut off from their magazines and communications at the very moment they were endeavouring to inflict that injury on the enemy: the vigour of the fight at Jena, and the incomparable energy with which the mighty host which there conquered was dispersed like a fan in pursuit of the broken remains of the enemy, and incessantly pressed on till they were totally destroyed, were worthy of the highest admiration. But in the very outset of the campaign, he exposed himself

to unnecessary hazard, and but for a change of position on the part of the bulk of the Prussian army, of which he was ignorant, might have been involved in as great a catastrophe as the rout on the banks of the Inn had been to the Imperialists. To advance and attack the Prussian army, strongly posted at Jena, through the narrow and rugged defiles of the Landgrafenberg, was a greater piece of rashness in military conduct than it was in the Archduke John to advance against Moreau through the pines of Hohenlinden. Napoleon has told us this himself,—“The first principle of the military art,” says he, “is never to fight with a defile in your rear; for if defeated in such a station, total ruin is hardly avoidable.”¹ Had the whole Prussian army, a hundred thousand strong, continued posted at the opening of the defiles as it was only the day before, instead of a rearguard of forty thousand only, the French would probably have never been able to debouch, and a disastrous retreat have been experienced. There was little of the usual calculation of means to end in this great commander, when he himself, with eighty thousand men, was opposed only to Hohenlohe with forty thousand, while Davoust, with thirty thousand, was left to struggle with the King in person, at the head of sixty-five thousand. No man knew better than Napoleon that such combinations were against the first principles, not merely of the military art, but of common sense applied to such subjects. But the truth is that the campaign of Austerlitz had given him an undue confidence in his destiny; he deemed himself invincible, because he had always hitherto proved so; and already were to be seen the symptoms of that fatal rashness which was to lead him to the Moscow retreat and the disasters of Leipsic.

After making every allowance for the magnitude of the defeat sustained by the Prussians at Jena and Auerstadt, and the extraordinary circumstance of the fugitives from these two fields getting intermingled during their nocturnal flight, there is something extraordinary and almost unaccountable in the sudden prostration of the monarchy. Had the people been lukewarm or disaffected in the cause, it would have admitted of easy solution; but this was

CHAP.
XLIII.

1806.

¹ Nap. Mem.
Book ix. 124,
125, on
Waterloo.

102.

Reflections
on the sudden
fall of Prus-
sia.

CHAP.
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very far indeed from being the case: public spirit ran high, patriotic ardour was universal, and unanimity unprecedented against Gallic aggression existed among all classes. Yet in the midst of this ardent and enthusiastic feeling, pusillanimity the most disgraceful was generally evinced, and fortresses all but impregnable surrendered at the first summons of a contemptible enemy! Where were the soldiers of the Great Frederick, where the constancy of the Seven Years' War, when Magdeburg, Stettin, Custrin, and Glogau lowered their colours without firing a shot, and the weakness of these garrisons permitted the army on the Vistula to be reinforced at the decisive moment by forty thousand men, who otherwise would have been chained round their walls? These unprecedented capitulations demonstrate that, however high was the spirit of part of the nation, the same feelings were not universal, and the kingdom of Prussia, newly cemented by the genius of Frederick, had not yet acquired that general patriotic spirit which can withstand the severer shocks of adversity, and constitutes the only secure basis of national independence. And the English historian who recollects how the energies of his own country were prostrated in a similar manner after the battle of Hastings, will probably feel charitably towards an infant nation placed in such trying circumstances; and feel a deeper thankfulness for that long career of national independence, that unbroken line of national glory, which has formed the indomitable public spirit of his own country, and constitutes the unseen chain which has so long held together the immense fabric of the British dominions.

103.
General despondency
which it occasions in
Europe.

In proportion to the unbounded enthusiasm which these wondrous events excited in France, was the despondency which they diffused through the other states of Europe. Alarm now seized the most sanguine, despair took possession of the most resolute. The power which had risen up in Europe to vanquish and destroy seemed beyond the reach of attack. Every effort made against it, every coalition formed for its overthrow, had led only to fresh triumphs, and a more complete consolidation of its strength. The utmost efforts of Austria, supported by all the wealth of England and all the military strength of Russia, had sunk

in the conflict ; and now a few weeks had sufficed to dissipate that admirable army which the Great Frederick had bequeathed as the phalanx of independence to his country. The thoughtful and philanthropic, more even than the multitude, were penetrated with apprehensions at these portentous events. They looked back to ancient times, and read in the long degradation of Greece and the Byzantine empire, the consequences of their subjugation from the military force of Rome, and could anticipate no brighter prospect for futurity than the ultimate resurrection of Europe after many ages of slavery and decline.* So little can the greatest intellects anticipate the future course of events in a society so perpetually influenced by new moving powers as that of modern Europe ; and so necessary is it, in forming a judgment on the ultimate consequences of existing changes, not merely to look back to the lessons of history, but take into account also the hitherto unexperienced influence of fresh causes rising into action in the ever-varying scene of human affairs.

That bright dawn, however, which philanthropy looked for in vain, and philosophy was unable to anticipate in the dark gloom of the political horizon, the ardent mind of a hero had already begun to descry ; and, what is very remarkable, he fixed on the precise circumstances in the temper of the times which were destined to make it ultimately expand to all the lustre of day. "I reckon much," said Blucher to Bourrienne at Hamburg, whither he had retired on his parole from Lubeck, "on the public spirit of Germany, on the enthusiasm which reigns in our universities. Success in war is ephemeral ; but defeat itself contributes to nourish in a people the principles of honour and a passion for national glory. Be assured, when a whole people are resolved to emancipate themselves from foreign domination, they will never fail to succeed. I have no fears for the result. We shall end by having a landwehr such as the slavish spirit of the French

104.
Blucher's
opinion of the
probable re-
surrection of
Germany.

* See, in particular, Sir James Mackintosh's letter to Gentz on this subject, *Memoirs*, i. 384. It is curious, but not unnatural, to observe the earliest and warmest advocates of the French Revolution most gloomy in their anticipations of its ultimate effects. Ardour of imagination, the habit of looking before the multitude into the ultimate consequences of passing events, a sincere desire for the good of mankind, naturally in the same minds, in 1790 and 1806, produced these opposite results.

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could never produce. England will yield us its subsidies; we shall renew our alliances with Russia and Austria. I know well the principles of the coalition. The sole object which the allied sovereigns have in view is to put a limit to the system of aggression which Napoleon has adopted, and which he pursues with the most alarming rapidity. In our first wars against France, at the commencement of its Revolution, we fought for the rights of kings, in which, for my part, I felt very little interest; but now the case is totally changed; the population of Prussia makes common cause with its government, the safety of our hearths is at stake; and reverses, when such a spirit is abroad, destroy armies without breaking the spirit of a nation. I look forward without anxiety to the future, because I foresee that fortune will not always favour your Emperor. The time may come when *Europe in a body, humiliated by his exactions, exhausted by his depredations, will rise up in arms against him.* The more he enchains different nations, the more terrible will be the explosion when they burst their fetters. Who can now dispute the insatiable passion for aggrandisement with which he is animated? No sooner is Austria subjugated than Prussia is destroyed; and though we have fallen, Russia remains to continue the strife. I cannot foresee the issue of this struggle; but supposing it to be favourable to France, it will come to an end. You will speedily see new wars arise, and if we hold firm, France, worn out with conquests, will at length succumb.”¹

¹ Bour. vii.
205, 206.

105.
Salutary ultimate result of this suffering to Prussia.

Blucher was right in these anticipations. It is not in the suffering but the prosperity of nations that the seeds of ruin are in general to be found; the anguish and humiliation which are the consequences of weakness, disunion, or corruption, are often the severe school of ultimate improvement. If we would discern the true cause of the fall of Prussia, we must go back to the vacillation and selfishness which characterised its national councils during the ten prosperous years which succeeded the treaty of Bâle in 1795: which caused it to temporise when the moment for action had arrived, and brought it in heedless security to the very edge of perdition; which lowered the national feeling by sacrificing the national honour, and paralysed the arms of its allies by inspiring distrust in the

good faith of its government. In the misery and degradation consequent on the battle of Jena, is to be found the commencement of the causes destined to produce the glorious resurrection of 1813. Periods of adversity are seldom lost in the end to nations any more than individuals; it is the flow of unbroken prosperity, which, by promoting the growth of the selfish passions, is the real source, in most cases, of irremediable ruin. Those twin curses of humanity, despotism and democracy, act in precisely the same way on the sources of public welfare, by poisoning the fountains of individual exertion, and inducing in the active members of society a slavish submission to the authority of the irresistible executive, or a selfish prosecution of their own interest, instead of a generous devotion to the public good. Till this last stage of national degradation has arrived, there is always a hope of revival to its fortunes: no misfortunes are irremediable as long as the spirit of the people is unbroken; no calamities irreparable but those which undermine their virtue.

CHAPTER XLIV.

CAMPAIGN OF EYLAU.—DEC. 1806—MARCH 1807.

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1.
Advance of
the French
and Russians
to the Vis-
tula.

THE campaign of Jena had destroyed the power of Prussia ; inconsiderate valour had yielded to overwhelming force and skilful combination ; with more justice the King than the people could say with Francis I. at Pavia, *Tout est perdu hors l'honneur*. But Russia was still untouched ; and while her formidable legions remained unsubdued, the war, so far from being completed, could hardly be said to have seriously commenced :—Napoleon felt this. On the Trebbia, at Novi, at Diernstein, and Austerlitz, the French had experienced the stern valour of these northern warriors ; and he counted the hours, as the mortal conflict approached, which was to bring either universal empire or irreparable ruin in its train. Nor were the Russians less desirous to commence the struggle. Confident in the prowess of their arms—proud of the steady growth of an empire, the frontiers of which have never yet receded, and which its meanest peasant believes is one day to subdue the world—they anticipated a glorious result from their exertions, and, without underrating the forces of their opponents, indulged a sanguine hope that the North would prove the limits of their power, and that, while they repelled them from their own frontiers, they would afford the means of liberation to oppressed Europe. The severity of a Polish winter could not deter these undaunted combatants. Eager for the conflict, both their mighty hosts approached the Vistula ; and, at a period of the year when some respite is usually given in ordinary war to suffering humanity, commenced a new campaign,

and advanced through a snowy wilderness to the bloody fields of Preussich-Eylau.

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2.

Military pre-
parations of
Russia.

Alexander had displayed the greatest activity in repairing the losses which his army had sustained in the campaign of Austerlitz. Thirty fresh squadrons and fifty-one battalions had been added to its amount, all the chasms occasioned by the casualties of war supplied, and the new French organisation into divisions universally adopted.* Nor was this all:—anxious to rouse the religious enthusiasm of his subjects, and deeply impressed with the magnitude of the struggle which was approaching, he had called out a defensive militia of six hundred thousand men, and excited their devout loyalty to the highest degree by a proclamation, in which Napoleon was represented as the relentless enemy of the Christian religion, and they were called on to shed their best blood in defence of the faith of their fathers.† This proclamation excited

* The Russian army was divided into eighteen divisions, each of which was composed of six regiments of infantry, ten squadrons of heavy cavalry, ten of light, two batteries of heavy cannon, three of light or horse artillery, and a company of pioneers; in all for each, eighteen battalions, twenty squadrons, and seventy-two pieces of cannon; about 12,000 men. The army was thus divided:—

	Battalions.	Squadrons.	Cannons.
1. Guard under Grand-duke Constantine,	33	35	84
2. Polish army—Eight divisions, under Osterman, Sacken, Gallitzin, Touchkoff, Barclay de Tolly, Doctoroff, Essen, Gortchakoff, afterwards Kamenskoi,	147	170	504
3. Army of Moldavia—Five divisions, under Michelson as general-in-chief, commanded by Wolkonsky, Zacomilsky, Milaradowitch, Meindorf, and the Duke of Richelieu,	90	100	306
4. Intermediate corps under the Count Apraxin, consisting of the divisions of General Ritchoff, Prince Labanoff, and Gortchakoff,	54	30	144
Total,	324	335	1038

besides the local corps in Georgia, Finland, and garrison battalions. The whole regular force was about 380,000 men; but in no country is the difference between the numbers on paper and in the field so great as in Russia, and the troops engaged in the campaign of Poland never exceeded 80,000 men.—See JOMINI, ii. 335; and WILSON, 4.

† “Buonaparte,” said this proclamation, which was read in all the Russian churches, “after having, by open force or secret intrigue, extended his power over the countries which he oppresses, menaces Russia, which Heaven protects. It is for you to prevent the destroyer of peace, of the faith, and of the happiness of mankind, from seducing the orthodox Christians. He has trampled under foot every principle of truth; in Egypt he preached the Koran of Mahomet, in France manifested his contempt for the religion of Jesus Christ by convoking Jewish synagogues. Do you love your fellow-creatures? Fly the persecutor of Christians. Do you desire to be saved? Oppose an invincible barrier to his advances. He has dared to the combat God and Russia;

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¹ Jom. ii.
335. Hard.
ix. 375, 376.
Dum. xvii.
99. Wilson,
Polish War,
10, 11.

the ridicule of a large part of Europe, still tainted by infidel fanaticism, and not then awakened to the impossibility of combating revolutionary energy with any other weapons but those of religious fervour. But it was admirably calculated for the simple-minded people to whom it was addressed, and excited such an enthusiasm, that not only was this immense armament without difficulty raised, but, contrary to usual custom, the peasants drawn for the regular army joyfully left their homes, and marched with songs of triumph, amidst the blessings of their countrymen, towards the frontier, the anticipated scene of their glory or their martyrdom.¹

3.
Composition
and character
of her armies.

The troops who were now pressing forward to defend the western frontiers of the empire were very different from those with whom the French had hitherto, for the most part, contended in the fields of Germany or the Italian plains. The forces of civilisation, the resources of art, were exhausted; the legions of Napoleon had reached the old frontier of Europe; the energy of the desert, the hosts of Asia were before them; passions hitherto, save in La Vendée, unexperienced in the contest, were now brought into action. Religious enthusiasm, patriotic ardour, the fervour of youthful civilisation, were arrayed against the power of knowledge, the discipline of art, and the resources of ancient opulence. There were to be seen the serf but recently emancipated from the servitude of his fathers, whose mother and sisters had checked the lamentations of nature when he assumed the military habit, and bade him go forth, the champion of Christendom, to present glory or future paradise; there the peasant, inured from infancy to hardy exercise, ignorant alike of the enjoyments and the corruptions of urban society, long accustomed to rural labour, and habituated equally to the glow of a Russian bath or the severity of a Scythian winter; there the Cossack, whose steed, nourished on the steppes of the Don, had never yet felt the curb, while his master, following his beloved Attaman to the theatre of

prove that you are the defenders of the Most High and of your country. Chase far from your frontiers that monster; punish his barbarity to so many innocents, whose blood cries aloud to Heaven for vengeance. God will hear the prayer of the faithful; he will shield you with his power; he will cover you with his grace. Your exploits will be celebrated by the church and by your country; immortal crowns or abodes of eternal felicity await you."—HARDENBERG, ix. 376.

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action, bore his formidable lance in his hand, his pistols and sword by his side, and his whole effects, the fruit of years of warfare, in the folds of his saddle. Careless of the future, the children of the desert joyfully took their way to the animating fields of plunder and triumph; mounted on small but swift and indefatigable horses, they were peculiarly adapted for a country where provisions were scanty, forage exhausted, and hardships universal. The heat of summer, the frost of winter, were alike unable to check the vigour of their desultory operations; and when the hosts on either side were arrayed in battle, and the charge of regular forces was requisite, they often appeared with decisive effect at the critical moment. Urging their blood-horses to full speed, they bore down, by the length of their spears and the vehemence of their onset, the most powerful cavalry of Western Europe.^{1*}

¹ Wilson, viii. 28. Personal observation.

If the whole disposable Russian forces had been united upon the Vistula, they would have presented an imposing mass of a hundred and fifty thousand warriors, against which all the efforts of Napoleon would, in all probability, have been exerted in vain. But by a strange and unaccountable infatuation, at the very moment when this formidable contest awaited them on the Polish plains, a large portion of their disposable force was drawn off to the shores of the Danube, and a Turkish superadded to the already overwhelming weight of the French war. Of the causes which led to this unhappy diversion, and the grounds which the cabinet of St Petersburg set forth in vindication of their aggression on the Ottoman domi-

4.
Imprudent division of their force by the invasion of Moldavia.

* "Mounted," says Sir Robert Wilson, "on a little, ill-conditioned, but well-bred horse, which can walk with ease at the rate of five miles an hour, or dispute in his speed the race with the swiftest, with a short whip on his wrist, as he wears no spur, armed with the lance, a pistol in his girdle, and a sword, the Cossack never fears a competitor in single combat; but in the Polish war he irresistibly attacked every opposing squadron in the field. Terror preceded his charge; and in vain discipline endeavoured to present an impediment to the protruding pikes. The cuirassiers alone preserved some confidence, and appeared to baffle the arms and skill of the Cossack; but in the battle of Preuss-Eylau, when the cuirassiers made their desperate charge on the Russian centre, and passed through an interval, the Cossacks instantly bore down on them, speared them, unhorsed them, and, in a few moments, five hundred and thirty Cossacks reappeared in the field, equipped with the spoils of the slain. But they did not permanently wear them; the steel trophies were conveyed by subscription to the Don and the Volga, where they are inspected as trophies of their prowess, and respected as the pride of their kindred and glory of their nation."—WILSON, 27, 28. When the author saw the Cossacks of the Don and the Guard at Paris in May 1814, this description was still precisely applicable.

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Nov. 23.

¹ Jom. ii.
336, 337.
Ann. Reg.
1806, 209.
Bign. vi. 57.

5.
Embarrass-
ment of Na-
poleon on the
Polish ques-
tion.

nions, a full account will be given in the sequel of this work;* but, in the mean time, its effect in causing a most calamitous division of the Russian force is too obvious to require illustration. At Eylau the hostile forces on either side were nearly equal, and both retired without any decisive advantage from that scene of blood; ten thousand additional troops would there have overthrown Napoleon, and driven him to a disastrous retreat, while fifty thousand of the best troops of the Muscovite empire were uselessly employed on the banks of the Danube. At the same time it is evident that the war in Moldavia was resolved on, and the necessary orders transmitted, before the disasters in Prussia were known, or the pressing necessity for succour on the Vistula could have been anticipated; the battle of Jena was fought on the 14th October, and on the 23d November General Michelson entered Moldavia, and commenced the Turkish campaign. But though the Russian cabinet is thus not answerable for having given orders to commence an additional war unnecessarily in the midst of the desperate struggle in the north of Germany, yet it cannot be relieved of the responsibility of having, without any adequate cause, provoked hostilities in the southern provinces of its empire, at a time when the contest in Saxony, if not commenced, might at least have been easily foreseen, when the resolution to annul the treaty, signed by D'Oubril at Paris, had been already taken, and all the strength of Europe was required to meet the encounter with the conqueror of Austerlitz on the banks of the Elbe.^{1†}

While Russia, distracted by the varied interests of her mighty dominions, was thus running the hazard of destruction by the imprudent division of her forces in presence of the enemy, Napoleon was extremely perplexed at Posen by the consideration of the Polish question. The destiny of the Sarmatian people, which enters so deeply into the solution of every political

* See *infra*, chap. lxi. on the Turkish War.

† The determination to refuse the ratification of the treaty, signed at Paris by D'Oubril, was taken at St Petersburg on the 25th August—the Dneister was passed on the 23d November. The resolution to provoke a Turkish war, therefore, was taken after it was known that a continued struggle with the enemy, whose strength they had felt at Austerlitz, had become inevitable.—*Ante*, chap. xlii. § 72.

combination of the nineteenth century, here stood in the very foremost rank, and called for immediate decision. The advance of the French armies through Prussian Poland towards Warsaw, the ambiguous, but still encouraging words of the Emperor to the numerous deputations which approached him, had awakened to the highest degree the hopes and expectations of that unfortunate, but impassioned race. A solemn deputation from Great Poland, headed by Count Dzadiniki, waited upon Napoleon, and announced an approaching insurrection of the Polish nation, headed by their nobles, palatines, and chiefs a great excitement prevailed in Lithuania, and symptoms of alarming effervescence were visible even in Gallicia. The crisis was of the most violent kind; an immediate decision was called for by imperious necessity; Napoleon was much at a loss how to act, and the question was warmly debated by the council assembled at his headquarters.¹

¹ Jom. i. 328.
Oginski, ii.
335, 336, 338.

On the one hand, it was urged by the friends of Poland, "that the only ally in the east of Europe, on whom France could really and permanently depend, was now preparing to range itself by her side, and enter into a contest of life or death in her support. The alliances of cabinets may be dissolved, the friendships of kings may be extinguished, but the union of nations, founded on identity of interest and community of feeling, may be calculated upon as of more lasting endurance. But what people was ever impelled towards another by such powerful motives, or animated in the alliance by such vehement passions, as Poland now is towards France? Alone of all great nations, in ancient or modern times, she has been partitioned by her powerful and ambitious neighbours, struck down to the earth by hostile armies, and swept, by repeated spoliations, from the book of existence. Her nationality is destroyed, her people scattered, her glories at an end. Is it possible that these injuries can be forgotten, that such unparalleled calamities should leave no traces behind them, in the breasts of the descendants of the Sarmatian race? Is it not certain, on the contrary, that they have left there profound impressions, ineradicable passions, which are ready, on the first favourable opportunity, to raise

6.
Arguments in
favour of the
restoration of
Poland.

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throughout the whole scattered provinces of the old republic an inextinguishable flame? Where has the Emperor found such faithful followers, such devoted fidelity, as in the Polish legions of the Italian army, whom Muscovite barbarity drove to seek an asylum in foreign lands? Is it expedient to refuse the proffered aid of a hundred thousand such warriors, who are ready to fly to his standards from the whole wide-spread fields of Sarmatia?

7.
Security for
the perma-
nence of her
alliance with
France.

“True, they are undisciplined—without arms, fortresses, magazines, or resources—but what does all that signify? Napoleon is in the midst of them; his invincible legions will precede them in the fight; from his enemies and their spoilers his victorious sword will wrest the implements of war; in the example of his followers, they will see the model of military discipline. The Poles are by nature warriors; little training or organisation is requisite to bring them into the field. When the regular forces of Germany had sunk in the conflict, their tumultuary array chased the infidels from the heart of Austria, and delivered Vienna from Mussulman bondage. Nor is it merely a temporary succour which may be anticipated from their exertions; lasting aid, a durable alliance, may with confidence be expected from their necessities. Surrounded by the partitioning powers, they have no chance of independence but in the French alliance; the moment they desert it, they will be again crushed by their ambition. Not only the nationality of Poland, but the individual safety of its whole inhabitants, must for ever bind them to their deliverers; they well know what cruel punishments and confiscations await them if they again fall under the Muscovite yoke. In restoring the oldest of European commonwealths, therefore, not only will a memorable act of justice be done, a memorable punishment of iniquity inflicted, but a durable alliance on the frontier of civilisation will be formed, and a barrier erected against the inroads of barbarism in the people, who, in every age, have devoted their blood to combating its advances.”¹

¹ Jom. ii.
328. Oginski,
ii. 337.

Specious as these arguments were, and powerfully as they appealed to the generous feelings of our nature, it may be doubted whether they were not opposed by others

of greater solidity. "It is in vain," it was urged in reply, "to dwell on the misfortunes of Poland, or represent her partition as an unavoidable calamity for which her inhabitants are noways answerable. Such a misfortune may doubtless sometimes occur to a small state surrounded by larger ones; but was that the case in the present instance? On the contrary, Poland was originally the most powerful nation in the north: her dominions extended from the Euxine to the Baltic, and from Swabia to Smolensko. All Prussia, great part of the Austrian dominions, and a large portion of Russia, have at different times been carved out of her wide-spread territories. So far from being weaker than Russia, she was originally much stronger; and the standards of the Jagellons and the Piasts have more than once been planted in triumph on the walls of the Kremlin. Nevertheless, her history for the last five hundred years has been nothing but a succession of disasters, illuminated at intervals by transient gleams of heroic achievement; and, notwithstanding the valour of her inhabitants, her frontiers have, from the earliest times, been constantly receding, until at length she became the prey of potentates who had risen to importance by acquisitions reft from herself. So uniform and undeviating a course of misfortune, in a kingdom so brave, so enthusiastic, and so populous, as even at the moment of its partition to contain sixteen millions of inhabitants, argues some incurable vice in its domestic institutions. It is not difficult to see what this vice was, when we contemplate the uniform and fatal weakness of the Executive, the disorders consequent on an elective monarchy, the inveterate and deadly animosity of faction, and the insane democratic spirit of a plebeian noblesse, which made John Sobieski, a century before its final destruction, prophesy the approaching ruin of the commonwealth.

"Such being the character of Polish institutions, as they have been ascertained by experience, and proved by the ruin of the commonwealth, it becomes a most serious question whether it is for the interest of France, for the aid of such an ally, to incur the certain and inveterate hostility of the three northern powers. That Russia, Prussia, and Austria will thenceforth be combined in an

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8.

Arguments
on the other
side against
interfering
on behalf of
the Poles.

9.

Certainty of
the restora-
tion of Poland
inducing the
inveterate
hostility of
the Northern
powers.

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indissoluble alliance against France, if Poland is restored, and the rich provinces now enjoyed by them from its partition wrested from their vast dominions, is evident; and, whatever may be thought of the strength of the Sarmatian levies, there can be but one opinion as to the military resources which they enjoy. What aid can Polish enthusiasm bring to the French standards, to counterbalance this strong combination of the greatest military powers of Europe? A hundred thousand horsemen, brave, doubtless, and enthusiastic, but destitute of fortresses, magazines, and resources, and inhabiting a level plain, unprotected by mountains, rivers, or any natural frontier, and open on all sides to the incursions of their well-organised opponents—Supposing that, by the aid of the vast army and still vaster reputation of Napoleon, they shall succeed at this time in bearing back the Russian hosts, and wresting Lithuania from their grasp, what may not be apprehended from the appearance of Austria on the theatre of conflict, and the debouching of a hundred and fifty thousand men in the rear of the Grand Army, when far advanced in the deserts of Muscovy? That the cabinet of Vienna is preparing for the conflict is evident; that she is arming is well known; fear and uncertainty as to the future alone restrain her forces. But the stroke which by restoring Poland severs Galicia from her empire, will at once determine her policy, and bring the Imperial legions in formidable strength to the banks of the Elbe. Even supposing that, by an unprecedented series of victories, these dangers are averted for the moment, and the French battalions, loaded with honours, regain the Rhine, how is Poland, still torn by intestine faction, and destitute of any solid institutions, to withstand her formidable military neighbours? How is France, at the distance of four hundred leagues, to protect a power whose internal weakness has always been such that it has never been able to protect itself against its own provinces? If a barrier is to be erected against Russian ambition, and a state formed dependent on the French alliance for its existence, far better to look for it in Prussia, whose history exhibits as remarkable a rise as that of Poland does a decline, and the solidity of whose institutions,¹ not less than the firmness of her

¹ Jom. ii.
329.

national character, has been decisively exhibited in contending with all the military forces of Europe during the Seven Years' War."

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Pressed by so many difficulties, and struck in an especial manner by the danger of bringing the forces of Austria upon his rear, while engaged in the hardships of a winter campaign in Poland, Napoleon resolved upon a middle course.* Irrevocably fixed upon humbling Prussia to the dust, and entirely indifferent to the irritation which he excited among its people, he resolved to rouse to the uttermost the inhabitants of Prussian Poland; but at the same time sedulously to abstain from any invitations to Galicia to revolt, and even to hold out no encouragement to the Russian provinces of Lithuania to join the standard of Polish independence. Kosciusko, who, since his heroic achievements in 1794, had lived in retirement near Fontainebleau, was invited by Napoleon to join his countrymen, and a proclamation, drawn up in his name, was even published in the French papers, in which he promised speedily to put himself at their head;† but the course of time soon dispelled the illusion, and it became painfully evident to the Poles that their illustrious hero, despairing of success, or having no confidence in their pretended allies, was resolved to bear the responsibility of no future insurrections under such auspices. In fact, he had been profoundly affected by the indifference manifested by all the European powers to the fate of Poland on occasion of the last partition, and thoroughly impressed with the idea that no efficacious co-operation could be expected from any of them. While, therefore,

10.
Napoleon
adopts a
middle
course, and
rouses only
Prussian
Poland.

* "I love the Poles," said he to Rapp, after having received one of their deputations; "their ardour pleases me. I could wish to render them an independent people, but it is no easy undertaking. Too many nations are interested in their spoils—Austria, Russia, Prussia. If the match is once lighted, there is no saying where it would stop. My first duty is towards France, and it is no part of it to sacrifice its interests to Poland—that would lead us too far. We must leave its destinies in the hands of the supreme disposer of all things—to Time. It will possibly teach us hereafter what course we ought to pursue."—BOUR. vii. 250.

† "Kosciusko," said this fabricated epistle, dated 1st November, "is about to place himself in the midst of you. He sees in your deliverers no ambitious conquerors; the great nation is before you; Napoleon expects you; Kosciusko calls you. I fly to your succour; never more to leave your side. Worthy of the great man whose arm is stretched forth for your deliverance, I attach myself to your cause never again to abandon it. The bright days of Poland have returned; we are under the aegis of a monarch accustomed to overcome difficulties by miracles."—HARDENBERG, ix. 329.

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¹ Oginski, ii.
337.II.
Forged pro-
clamations
issued in
Kosciusko's
name, and
great excite-
ment in
Poland.

he rendered full justice to the military talents of Napoleon, he not the less despaired of seeing the deliverance of Sarmatia in good faith attempted by his despotic arms. The task of rousing the Poles in the Prussian dominions was therefore committed to Dombrowski and Wybicki; the former of whom had acquired a deserved celebrity at the head of the Polish Legion in Italy, while the latter possessed such influence with his countrymen as to promise great advantage to the cause of Napoleon.¹

At the same time, every care was taken to excite the feelings and diminish the apprehensions of the Poles of Prussia; heart-stirring proclamations in Kosciusko's name were addressed to them by the generals of their nation in the Italian army, but that brave man himself, faithful to the oath he had taken to the Emperor of Russia, and aware of the delusive nature of Napoleon's support, refused to take any part in these proceedings; resisted all the brilliant offers which he made to induce him to engage in his service, and even had the boldness, in foreign journals, to disavow the letter which the French government had published in his name. Notwithstanding this reserve, however, the advance of the French armies to Warsaw, and the sedulous care which they took to save the inhabitants from every species of insult or contribution, produced an extraordinary excitement in the Polish provinces. Universally they were hailed as deliverers—the substantial benefits, the real protection, the fostering tranquillity of the Prussian administration were forgotten in the recollection of ancient achievements, and, incited by the heart-stirring prospect of coming independence, the nation was fast running into its ancient and ruinous anarchy. The public exultation was at its height when Napoleon arrived at Posen: several regiments were already formed in Prussian Poland; and the arrival of the French troops in Warsaw, which the Russians evacuated at their approach, was universally hailed as the first day of Polish Restoration.²

² Oginski, ii.
337, 338.
Hard. ix. 344,
347. Bign. vi.
79, 81.

Napoleon was not insensible to the important effects of this national enthusiasm, both in augmenting the resources of his own army, and intercepting those of his opponents; but at the same time he felt the necessity of not rousing all Poland in a similar manner, or incurring the imme-

diated hostility of Austria, by threatening the tenure by which she held her Polish acquisitions. He resolved, therefore, to moderate the general fervour, and confine it to the provinces of Prussia, where it was intended to excite a conflagration; and this was done by the bulletin which appeared on the 1st December:—"The love which the Poles entertain for their country, and the sentiment of nationality, is not only preserved entire in the heart of the people, but it has become more profound from misfortune. Their first passion, the universal wish, is to become again a nation. The rich issue from their chateaus to demand with loud cries the re-establishment of the nation, and to offer their children, their fortune, their influence, in the cause. That spectacle is truly touching. Already they have every where resumed their ancient costumes, their ancient customs. Is, then, the throne of Poland about to be restored, and is the nation destined to resume its existence and independence? From the depth of the tomb is it destined to start into life? God alone, who holds in his hands the combination of great events, is the arbiter of that great political problem, but certainly never was an event more memorable or worthy of interest." Situated as Napoleon was, the reserve of this language was an act of humanity as well as justice to the unhappy race whose destiny it still held in suspense; but it contributed powerfully to allay the rising enthusiasm of the Russian and Austrian provinces of the ancient commonwealth; and the prudent, despairing of any national resurrection from such an ally, began to ask, "if the restoration of the Republic of Poland could in good faith be expected from the man who had extinguished the liberty of his own country?"¹

One chance, and only one, remained to Napoleon of smoothing away the difficulties which surrounded the restoration of Poland, and that consisted in the proposal, which at this time he made to Austria, to exchange its share of Poland for its old province of Silesia. During the negotiation with Prussia for a separate peace, he only held out the prospect of this exchange in a doubtful manner to the cabinet of Vienna; but no sooner had the King of Prussia refused to ratify the armistice of Charlottenberg, than General Andreossey was authorised

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12.

Napoleon's
dubious bul-
letin on the
subject.
Dec. 1.¹ Oginski, ii.
339 Bign. vi.
80, 81. Luc-
ches. ii. 226.

13.

Napoleon
proposes to
Austria to
exchange
Gallicia for
Silesia, which
is refused.

Dec. 15.

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¹ Bign. vi.
90, 91. Hard.
ix. 349, 350.

14.
Napoleon's
strong declar-
ation in
favour of
Turkey.

to propose it formally to that power. Count Stadion replied, that the good faith of the Imperial government would not permit them to accept a possession whose surrender was not assented to by Prussia ; and it would indeed have been an extraordinary fault in policy, as well as breach of morality, to have thus despoiled a friendly power and reopened an ancient wound, at the very moment when a concentration of all energies was required to resist the enemy who threatened to destroy all the European states. In consequence of this refusal, the conduct of Napoleon, in regard to Poland, became still more guarded ; and, although a provisional government and local administration were formed at Warsaw, yet none but natives of Prussian Poland were admitted to any share in the direction of affairs.¹

During his stay at Posen, the French Emperor made, on repeated occasions, the strongest professions of his resolution to support the Turks against the invasion of the Russians. To the Prussian plenipotentiaries at Charlottenberg he declared, "That the greatest of all the evils which Prussia has occasioned to France by the late war, is the shock they have given to the independence of the Ottoman Porte ; as the imperious commands of the Emperor of Russia have brought back to the government of Wallachia and Moldavia the hospodars, justly banished from their administration ; which, in effect, reduces their principalities to the rank of Russian provinces. But the full and complete independence of the Ottoman empire will *ever be the object most at heart with the Emperor*, as it is indispensable for the security of France and Italy. He would esteem the successes of the present war of little value, if they did not give him the means of reinstating the Sublime Porte in complete independence. In conformity with these principles, the Emperor is determined that, until the Sultan shall have recovered the full and entire command both of Moldavia and Wallachia, and is completely *secured in his own independence*, the French troops will not evacuate any part of the countries they have conquered, or which may hereafter fall into their power !"² The same resolution was publicly announced in the bulletins, when intelligence of the ill-judged invasion of the principa-

² Lucches. ii.
186, 187.

lities arrived ; and yet, within six months afterwards, though Turkey had faithfully and gallantly stood to the French alliance under circumstances of extreme peril, Napoleon, as will shortly appear, signed a treaty at Tilsit, by which not only were Wallachia and Moldavia ceded to Russia, but provision was made for the partition of the whole Turkish dominions in Europe !

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While this great political question was under discussion, during the fortnight that the Emperor's stay continued at Posen, the army in great force approached the Vistula ; but the severity of the weather, and the incessant fatigue of the troops, in the long and dreary marches through that monotonous country at so inclement a season, produced a general feeling of despondency among the soldiers, and gave rise to a fermentation which even Napoleon deemed alarming. To the intoxication consequent on the victory of Jena had succeeded a mortal disquietude, when, immediately after such glorious successes, instead of the cantonments and repose which they expected, they found themselves dragged on in the depth of winter to begin a new campaign, amidst pathless snows and gloomy forests. In order to dispel these sinister presentiments, Napoleon took advantage of the anniversary of the battle of Austerlitz to address an animating proclamation to his army. "Soldiers ! this day year, at this very hour, you were on the memorable field of Austerlitz. The Russian battalions fled in terror before you, or, surrounded on all sides, laid down their arms to their conquerors. On the day following they read the words of peace, but they were deceitful. Hardly had they escaped, by the effects of a generosity perhaps blamable, from the disasters of the third coalition, than they set on foot a fourth ; but the new ally on whose skilful tactics they placed all their hopes is already destroyed. His strongholds, his capital, his magazines, two hundred and eighty standards, seven hundred field-pieces, five first-rate fortresses, are in our power. The Oder, the Warta, the deserts of Poland, have been alike unable to restrain your steps. Even the storms of winter have not arrested you an instant ; you have braved all, surmounted all. Every thing has flown at your approach. In vain have the Russians endea-

15.

His proclamation to his soldiers on the anniversary of Austerlitz.

Dec. 2.

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¹ Bign. vi.
75, 76. Bour.
vii. 251, 252.

16.
Its great ef-
fect. Forma-
tion of the
Temple of
Glory at
Paris.

Dec. 2.

voured to defend the capital of the ancient and illustrious Poland. The French eagle hovers over the Vistula: the brave and unfortunate Poles, when they behold you, imagine that they see the soldiers of Sobieski returning from his memorable expedition! Soldiers! we shall not again lay down our arms till a general peace has secured the power of our allies, and restored to our commerce liberty and its colonies. On the Elbe and the Oder we have conquered Pondicherry, our establishments in the Eastern Seas, the Cape of Good Hope, and the Spanish colonies. Who has given the Russians right to hope that they can balance the weight of destiny? Who has authorised them to overturn such great designs? Are not they and we the soldiers of Austerlitz?" Even in the forests of Poland, and amidst ice and snow, the thoughts of Napoleon were incessantly fixed on England and the East; and it was to overthrow her power on the banks of the Ganges that a campaign was undertaken in the depth of winter on the shores of the Vistula.¹

This proclamation, dictated by a profound knowledge of the French character, produced an extraordinary effect upon the soldiers. It was distributed with profusion over all Germany, and none but an eye-witness could credit the influence which it had in restoring the spirit of the men. The veterans in the front line forgot their fatigues and privations, and thought only of soon terminating the war by a second Austerlitz on the banks of the Vistula; those who were approaching by forced marches in the rear, redoubled their exertions to join their comrades in the more forward stations, and counted the days till they gained the sight of the eagles which appeared to be advancing to immortal renown. The better to improve upon these dispositions, and at the same time establish a durable record of the glorious achievements of his troops, Napoleon, by a decree published on the same day, gave orders for the erection of a splendid edifice on the site of the convent of the Madeleine, at the end of the Boulevards Italiens at Paris, with the inscription—"The Emperor Napoleon to the soldiers of the Grand Army." In the interior

were to be inscribed, on tablets of marble, the names of all those who had been present in the battles of Marengo, Austerlitz, and Jena; on tablets of massy gold, the names of all those who had fallen in these memorable conflicts. There also were to be deposited the arms, statues, standards, colours, and monuments of every description taken during the two campaigns by the Grand Army. Every year a great solemnity was to commemorate the glory of these memorable days; but, in the discourses or odes made on the occasion, no mention was ever to be made of the Emperor: like the statues of Brutus and Cassius at the funeral of Junia, his exploits, it was well known, would only be the more present to the mind from being withdrawn from the sight.¹

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¹ Bour. vii.
254. Las
Cas. i. 370.
Bign. vi. 77.

This project took a strong hold of the imagination of Napoleon; he gave immediate orders for the formation of plans for the edifice, and the purchase of all the buildings in the vicinity, in order to form a vast circular place of uniform buildings around it; and, as a previous decree had directed the construction of the Bourse or public exchange on that situation, he shortly after directed the Minister of the Interior to look out for another isolated situation for that structure, "worthy of the grandeur of the capital, and the greatness of the business which will one day be transacted within its walls." Such was the origin of those beautiful edifices, the Church of the Madeleine and the Exchange at Paris; and which, carried on through other reigns and completed under another dynasty, with that grandeur of conception and perseverance in execution by which all the public edifices in Paris are distinguished, will for centuries attract the educated from all countries to Paris, as the centre of modern architectural beauty. To the world at that time Napoleon revealed no other design in the structure of the Madeleine than that of a monument to the Grand Army; but, penetrated with the magnitude of the mission with which he was persuaded he was intrusted, that of closing the wounds of the Revolution, he in his secret heart destined for it another and a greater object. He intended to have made it an expiatory monument to

17.
Napoleon's
plans for its
construction.

Letter, 7th
March 1807.

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1806.

¹ Bour. vii.
254, 255.
Bign. vi. 77,
78. Las Cas.
i. 370, 371.

Louis XVI., Marie Antoinette, and the other victims of the Revolution—a design which he did not propose to declare for ten years, when the fever of revolutionary ideas was in a great measure exhausted; and therefore it was, that he directed its front to face the centre of the Place Louis XV., where those august martyrs had perished, and constructed it on the site of the Madeleine, where their uncoffined remains still lay in an undistinguished grave.¹ *

18.
Vast efforts
of Napoleon
to recruit his
army, and
secure his
flanks and
rear.

The commencement of a winter campaign which would obviously be attended with no ordinary bloodshed, required unusual precautions for the protection of the long line of communication of the Grand Army, and the efforts of Napoleon were incessant to effect this object. The march of troops through Germany was urged forward with all possible rapidity; some attempts at insurrection in Hesse were crushed with great severity; the conscripts, as they arrived from the Rhine or Italy at the different stations in the Prussian states, were organised and sent into the field almost before they had acquired the rudiments of the military art; and the subsidiary contingents of Saxony, Hesse Cassel, and the states of the Rhenish confederacy, raised to double their fixed amount. By these means not only were the rear and communications of the Grand Army preserved from danger, but successive additions to its active force constantly obtained; while at the same time Austria,

Napoleon's
secret design in
this edifice.

* “No one but myself,” said he, “could restore the memory of Louis XVI., and wash from the nation the crimes with which a few galley-slaves and an unhappy fatality had stained it. The Bourbons being of his family, and resting on external succour, in striving to do so, would have been considered as only avenging their own cause, and have increased the public animosity. I, on the contrary, sprung from the people, would have purified their glory, by expelling from their ranks those who had disgraced them, and such was my intention; but it was necessary to proceed with caution; the three expiatory altars at St Denis were only the commencement; the Temple of Glory on the foundation of the Madeleine was destined to be consecrated to this purpose with a far greater éclat. It was there that, near their tomb, above their very bones, the monuments of men, and the ceremonies of religion, would have raised a memorial to the memory of the political victims of the Revolution. This was a secret which was not communicated to above ten persons; but it was necessary to allow it to transpire in some degree to those who were intrusted with the preparation of designs for the edifice. I would not have revealed the design for ten years, and even then I would have employed every imaginable precaution, and taken care to avoid every possibility of offence. All would have applauded it; and no one could have suffered from its effects. Every thing in such cases depends on the mode and time of execution. Carnot would never have ventured under my government to write an apology for the death of the King, but he did so under the Bourbons. The difference lay here: that I would have marched with public opinion to punish it, whilst public opinion marched with him, so as to render him unassailable.”—LAS CAS. i. 370, 371.

whose formidable armaments on the Bohemian frontier already excited the attention of the Emperor, and had given rise to pointed and acrimonious remonstrances from his military envoy, General Andreosse, to the cabinet of Vienna, was overawed.*

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How to maintain these vast and hourly increasing armaments was a more difficult question: but here, too, the indefatigable activity of the Emperor, and his grinding system of making war support war, contrived to find resources. Requisitions of enormous magnitude were made from all the cities in his rear, especially those which had been enriched by the commerce of England: Napoleon seemed resolved that their ill-gotten wealth should, in the first instance, be devoted to the necessities of his troops. The decrees against English commerce were every where made a pretext for subjecting the mercantile cities to contributions of astounding amount. Fifty millions of francs (£2,000,000) was in the first instance demanded from Hamburg as a ransom for its English merchandise, seized in virtue of the decree of 21st November; and it only escaped by the immediate payment of sixteen millions (£640,000.) In addition to this, that unhappy city, which had taken no part in hostilities against France, was ordered to furnish at once fifty thousand great-coats for the use of the troops; while Lubeck, which had been successively pillaged by the troops of Blucher and Bernadotte, was compelled to yield up four hundred thousand lasts of corn,† and wood to the value of sixty thousand pounds; Leipsic redeemed its English merchandise for ten millions of francs, (£400,000,) while all the other Hanse Towns were subjected to equally severe requisitions;

19.

Enormous
contributions
levied on all
the conquered
states.

* In an audience of the Emperor of Austria, which that general obtained, he said, with more of military frankness than diplomatic ambiguity—"The Emperor Napoleon fears neither his avowed nor his secret enemies. Judging of intentions by public acts, he is too clear-sighted not to dive into hidden dispositions; and in this view, he would infinitely regret if we were compelled to arrive at the conclusion, that the considerable armaments which your Majesty has had on foot since the commencement of hostilities were intended to be directed in certain events against himself. Your Majesty appears to have assembled on the flank of the French army all your disposable forces, with magazines beyond all proportion to their amount. The Emperor asks what is the intention of this army while he is engaged with Russia on the banks of the Vistula? Ostensibly intended for the preservation of neutrality, how can such an object be its real destination, when there is not the slightest chance of its being threatened?"—BIGNON, vi. 88.

† Each last weighs 2000 kilogrammes, or about half a ton.—BOUR. vii. 249.

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1806.

and the great impost of one hundred and sixty-nine millions of francs (£6,800,000,) imposed after the battle of Jena, was every where collected from the Prussian territories with a rigour which greatly added to its nominal amount. Under pretext of executing the decree against English commerce, pillage was exercised in so undisguised a manner by the French inferior agents, that it attracted in many places the severe animadversion of the chiefs of the army. Thus, while the decrees of the Emperor professed to be grounded on the great principle of compelling the English government, by the pressure of mercantile embarrassment, to accede to the liberty of the seas, in their execution he had already departed from their ostensible object; and, while the merchandise seized was allowed to remain in the emporiums of British commerce, its confiscation was made a pretext for subjecting neutral states or towns to inordinate requisitions for the support of the Grand Army.¹ *

¹ Bour. vii.
247, 248.
Bign. vi. 98,
99. Hard. ix.
371, 372.

20.
Positions and
force of the
French on
the Vistula.

Nov. 30.

Dec. 2.

By these different means Napoleon was enabled, before the middle of December, not only to bring a very great force to bear upon the Vistula, but to have the magazines and equipments necessary for enabling it to undergo and keep the field, during the rigours of a Polish winter, in a complete state of preparation. Davoust and Murat had entered Warsaw at the end of November, which was abandoned by the Prussians at their approach, and two days afterwards they crossed the Vistula and occupied the important *tête du pont* of Praga on its right bank, which was in like manner evacuated without a struggle. On the right Lannes supported them, and spread himself as far as the Bug; while on the left, Ney had already made himself master of Thorn, and marched out of that fortress, supported by the cavalry of Bessières and followed by the corps of Bernadotte. In the centre, Soult and Augereau

* As an example at once of the enormous magnitude of these contributions, and the provident care of the Emperor for the health and comfort of his troops, reference may be made to his letter to the French governor of Stettin, from which contributions to the amount of twenty millions (£800,000) were demanded, though the city only contained 32,000 inhabitants. "You must seize goods to the amount of twenty millions, but do it by rule, and give receipts. Take payment as much as possible in kind; the great stores of wine which its cellars contain would be of inestimable importance; it is wine which in winter can alone give the victory."—BIGNON, vi. 99.

were preparing with the utmost activity to surmount the difficulties of the passage of the Vistula between Modlin and Wyssogrod. Thus, eight corps were assembled ready for active service on that river, which, even after taking into view all the losses of the campaign, and the numerous detachments requisite to keep up the communications in the rear, could in all bring a hundred thousand men into the field, while the powerful reinforcements on their march through Prussia and Poland, promised to enable the Emperor to keep up the active force in front at that great numerical amount.¹

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1806.

¹ Dum. xvii.
106, 116.
Jom. ii. 337,
338.

The Emperor Alexander was far from having an equal force at his disposal. The first army, under Benningsen, consisting of sixty-eight battalions and one hundred and twenty-five squadrons, could muster forty-five thousand men, organised into four divisions, under Osterman Tolstoy, Sacken, Prince Gallitzin, and Sidmaratzki. It arrived on the Vistula in the middle of November. The second, consisting also of sixty-eight battalions and one hundred squadrons, arranged in the divisions of Touchkoff, Doctoroff, Essen, and Aurepp, was about thirty thousand strong, its regiments having not yet filled up the chasms made by the rout of Austerlitz. The wreck of the Prussian forces, re-organised and directed under the able management of General Lestocq, did not number more than fifteen thousand men, when the numerous garrisons of Dantzic and Graudentz were completed from its shattered ranks. Thus the total Allied forces were not above ninety thousand strong, and for the actual shock of war in the field not more than seventy-five thousand men could be relied on. This imposing array was under the command of Field-marshal Kamenskoi, a veteran of the school of Suwarroff, nearly eighty years of age, and little qualified to measure swords with the conqueror of Western Europe; but the known abilities of Benningsen and Buxhowden, the two next in command, would, it was hoped, compensate for his want of experience in the novel art of warfare which Napoleon had introduced.²

21.
And of the
Russians.

² Dum. xvii.
99, 105.
Jom. ii. 338.
Bign. vi. 109.

Headquarters had been established at Pultusk since the 12th November: Warsaw, all the bridges of the Vistula, were in the hands of the Allies, and the firmness of their countenance gave rise to a belief that they were disposed

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1806.

22.

Positions of
the troops,
and their
evacuation of
Warsaw; and
Alexander's
proclamation
to his soldiers.
Nov. 12.

to dispute the passage of that river with the invaders. Until the arrival of the second army under Buxhowden, however, which was advancing by forced marches from the Niemen, they were in no condition to keep their ground against the French; and it was deemed better to give them the moral advantage arising from the occupation of the Polish capital, than hazard a general engagement with so decided an inferiority of force. After some inconsiderable skirmishes, therefore, the Russians fell back at all points, their advanced posts were all withdrawn across the Vistula, and Warsaw, evacuated on the 28th, was occupied by Davoust on the 30th November. Previous to the opening of the winter campaign, Alexander addressed the following proclamation to his soldiers:—“Prussia formerly was the barrier between France and Russia, when Napoleon’s tyranny extended over all Germany. But now the flame of war has burst out also in the Prussian states, and after great misfortunes, that monarchy has been struck down, and the conflagration now menaces the frontiers of our territory. It would be useless to prove to the Russians, who love the glory of their country, and are ready to undergo every sacrifice to maintain it, how such events have contributed to render our present efforts inevitable. If honour alone compelled us to draw our sword for the protection of our allies, how much more are we now called upon to combat for our own safety? We have in consequence taken all the measures which the national security requires—our army has received orders to advance beyond the frontier—Field-marshal Kamenskoi has been appointed to the command, with instructions to march vigorously against the enemy—all our faithful subjects will unite their prayers with ours to the Most High, who disposes of the fate of empires and battles, that he will protect our just cause, and that his victorious arm and blessing may direct the Russian army employed in the defence of European freedom.”¹

Nov. 30.

¹ Dum. xvii.

94, 100. Jom.

ii. 338, 339.

Bign. vi. 109,

110.

Sensible of the inferiority of its forces to those which Napoleon had assembled on the Vistula from all the states of Western Europe, the Russian cabinet made an application to the British government for a portion of those subsidies which she had so liberally granted on all former occasions to the powers who combated the common enemy

of European independence ; and, considering that the whole weight of the contest had now fallen on Russia, and the danger had now approached her own frontiers, they demanded, not without reason, a loan of six millions sterling, of which one was to be paid down immediately for the indispensable expenses connected with the opening of the campaign. It was easy to see, however, from the answer to this demand now, that the spirit of Pitt no longer directed the British councils. The request was refused by the ministry on the part of government ; but it was proposed that a loan should be contracted for in England for the service of Russia, and that, for the security of the lenders, the duties on English merchandise, at present levied in the Russian harbours, should be repealed, and in lieu thereof, the same duties should be levied at once in the British harbours, and applied to the payment of the interest of the loan to the British capitalists. This strange proposition, which amounted to a declaration of want of confidence, both in the integrity of the Russian government and the solvency of the Russian finances, was of course rejected, and the result was, that *no assistance, either in men or money, was afforded by England to her gallant ally in this vital struggle.* An instance of parsimony and blindness beyond all example calamitous and discreditable, when it is considered that Russia was at that moment bearing the whole weight of France on the Vistula, and that England had at her disposal twenty millions in subsidies, and a hundred thousand of the best soldiers in Europe.¹

No sooner had the heads of Buxhowden's column begun to arrive in the neighbourhood of Pultusk, than Kamenskoi, whose great age had by no means extinguished the vigour by which he was formerly distinguished, made a forward movement — headquarters were advanced to Nasielsk, and the four divisions of Benningsen's army cantoned between the Ukra, the Bug, and the Narew ; while Buxhowden's divisions, as they successively arrived, were stationed between Golymin and Makow ; and Les-tocq, on the extreme right of the Allies, encamped on the banks of the Drewentz, on the great road leading to Thorn, was advanced almost up to the walls of that fortress.² The object of this general advance was to circumscribe the

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23.

Application
for assistance
in men and
money to
England. Its
impolitic re-
fusal.¹ Hard. ix.
399, 400.
Bign. vi. 107,
108. Letter
to Marquis
Douglas.
Jan. 13, 1807.

24.

The Russians
resume the
offensive.
Dec. 11.² Dum. xvii.
121, 125.
Jom. ii. 339.
Bign. vi. 110

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French quarters on the right bank of the Vistula ; and as it was known that Napoleon with his guards was still at Posen, hopes were entertained that his troops would be entirely driven from the right bank before his arrival, and the river interposed between the winter quarters of the two armies.

25.
Napoleon ad-
vances to
Warsaw.
General en-
thusiasm
there.
Dec. 16.
Dec. 18.

No sooner did Napoleon hear of this forward movement of the Russians, than he broke up from his quarters at Posen, and arrived at Warsaw two days afterwards. No words can do justice to the warlike and patriotic enthusiasm which burst forth in that capital when they beheld the hero whom they hailed as their deliverer actually within their walls, and saw the ancient arms of Poland affixed to the door of the hotel where the provisional government of Prussian Poland was established. The nobility flocked into the capital from all quarters ; the peasantry every where assembled in the cities, demanding arms ; the national dress was generally resumed ; national airs universally heard ; several regiments of horse were speedily raised, and before the conclusion of the campaign, thirty thousand men were enrolled in disciplined regiments, from the Prussian provinces alone of the ancient monarchy. Still the general enthusiasm did not make Napoleon forget his policy : the provisional government was established by a decree of the Emperor, only “until the fate of *Prussian Poland* was determined by a general peace ;” and the prudent began to entertain melancholy presages in regard to the future destiny of a monarchy thus agitated by the passion of independence and the generous sentiments of patriotic ardour, with only a quarter of its former inhabitants to maintain the struggle against its numerous and formidable enemies.¹

Jan. 1, 1807.

¹ Bign. vi.
92. Camp. de
Saxe, iii. 178,
179.

26.
And resumes
the offensive
against the
Russians.

Having taken the precaution to establish strong *têtes du pont* at Praga, Modlin, Thorn, and all the bridges which he held over the Vistula, Napoleon lost not an instant in resuming the offensive in order to repel this dangerous incursion of the enemy. Davoust, who formed the advanced guard of the army, was pushed forward from Praga on the road towards Pultusk, and soon arrived on the Bug ; and, after having reconnoitred the whole left bank of that river, from its confluence with the Narew to its junction with the Vistula, made preparations for effect-

ing the passage at Okernin, a little below the junction with the Ukra. The Cossacks and the Russian outposts lined the opposite bank, and the difficulties of the passage were considerable ; but the Russians were not in sufficient force to dispute it in a serious manner ; and after some sharp skirmishing, the experienced talents of General Gauthier, who was intrusted with the enterprise, established the French on the right bank, where they soon after sustained a severe action with the Russian advanced guard at Czar-nowo. The Muscovites, however, returned in greater force ; and the result was, that all the French advanced guards which had been passed over were cut off, and their detachment fell back to the *tête du pont* established at the river. Meanwhile Soult advanced on the left to Plousk, and Ney and Bernadotte, with a portion of Murat's cavalry, moved forward to Soldan and Biezun from Thorn, in such a manner as to threaten to interpose between the detached corps under Lestocq and Benningsen's main body, which was concentrated in the neighbourhood of Pultusk.¹

This partisan warfare continued for ten days without any decisive result on either side ; but the arrival of Napoleon at Warsaw was the signal for the commencement of more important operations. On the 23d December, at daybreak, he set out from that capital for the army, with the guards and Lannes' corps, and no sooner arrived at the advanced posts of Davoust, than he dictated on the spot directions for forcing the passage of the Ukra, which had hitherto bounded all their incursions.* The operation was carried into effect with the happiest success at Czarnowo, and with that ardour with which the presence of the Emperor never failed to animate the troops. After a severe action of fourteen hours, the passage was forced, and Count Osterman, who commanded the Russian rear-guard, retreated upon Nasielsk. In this well-contested

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Dec. 11.

Dec. 12.

Dec. 21.

Dec. 22.

1 Jom. ii.

339. Dum.

xvii. 126, 123.

Wilson, 73,

74.

27.

Forcing of
the passage of
the Ukra by
the French.

* "Napoleon," says Rapp, "no sooner arrived in sight of Okernin, than he reconnoitred the position of the Russians, and the plain which it was necessary to pass before arriving at the river. Covered with woods, intersected by marshes, it was almost as difficult to traverse as the fieldworks, which were bristling with Cossacks, were to carry on the opposite bank. The Emperor surveyed them long and with close attention ; but as the thickets of wood in some places intercepted his view, he caused a ladder to be brought, and ascended to the roof of a cottage where he completed his observations. He then said, 'It will do—send an officer,' and when he arrived, dictated on the spot the minute directions for the movement of all the corps during the operation, which are preserved in Dumas." xvii. 137.—*Vide RAPP*, 125.

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Dec. 24.

¹ Wilson, 75,
76. Jom ii.
340. Dum.
xvii. 140, 153.

28.
Kamenskoi
loses his pre-
sence of
mind, and
orders the
sacrifice of
the artillery.

affair each party had to lament the loss of about a thousand men. Kamenskoi, finding the barrier which covered the front of his position forced, gave orders for concentrating his forces towards Pultusk; and the Allies accordingly fell back at all points. They were vigorously pursued by the French, and another desperate conflict took place in front of Nasielsk, between General Rapp and the Russians under Count Osterman Tolstoy, in which the latter were worsted, but not without a severe loss to the enemy. In this warm conflict the opposite bodies had become so intermingled, that Colonel Ouvaroff, an aide-de-camp of Alexander, was made prisoner by the French; while Count Philippe de Ségur, destined for future celebrity as the historian of the still more memorable campaign of 1812, and attached to Napoleon's household, fell into the hands of the Russians. On the same day Augereau fought from daybreak till sunset at Lochoczyn with the divisions opposed to him, which at length began to retire. Thus the Russians, pierced in the centre by the passage of the Ukra at Czarnowo and the combat at Nasielsk, were every where in full retreat. No decisive advantage had been gained; but the initiative had been taken from the enemy, and his divisions, separated from each other, were thrown into eccentric lines of retreat, which promised every moment to separate them more widely from each other.¹

Kamenskoi, though a gallant veteran, was altogether unequal to the perilous crisis which had now arrived. The army, separated into two parts, of which one was moving upon Golymin, the other falling back towards Pultusk, was traversing a continual forest, through roads almost impassable from the mud occasioned by a long-continued thaw, and the passage of innumerable carriages, which had broken it up in all parts. Overwhelmed by these difficulties, he issued orders to sacrifice the artillery, which impeded the retreat—gave directions to stop the supplies destined for the army at Grodno, and himself took the road of Lomza. Deeming such an order wholly unnecessary, and the result of that approaching insanity which soon after entirely overset the mind of the veteran marshal, Benningsen took the bold step of disobeying it: and in order to gain time for the artillery and equipages

to defile in his rear, resolved to hold fast in the position of PULTUSK, with all the troops which he had at his disposal. Nothing could be more acceptable to the Russians, to whom the fatigues and privations of a retreat, at a season when sixteen hours out of the twenty-four were involved in total darkness, and the roads, bad at all times, were in many places several feet deep of mud, had been the severest trial of discipline and courage. No sooner, however, was it known that they were marching towards a chosen field of battle, than their hardships and difficulties were all forgotten, and the troops which, from mid-day on the 25th, successively arrived at Pultusk, took up their ground in parade order, full of enthusiasm for the battle on the morrow. Before it was dark, sixty battalions and fifty-five squadrons, with one hundred and twenty pieces of cannon, in all about forty thousand men, were here assembled, while the divisions of Doctoroff, Sacken, and Gallitzin were opposed at GOLYMIN to Augereau's corps, two divisions of Davoust's, and part of Murat's cavalry. Three Russian divisions, viz. those of Essen, Aurepp, and Touchkoff, were at such a distance in the rear both of Pultusk and Golymin, that they could not be expected to take any part in the actions which were approaching.¹

¹ Wilson, 77,
80. Jom. ii.
341. Dum.
xvii. 159, 162.

The object of Napoleon in these complicated operations was in the highest degree important: and the vigour of Benningsen and Prince Gallitzin, joined to the extreme shortness of the days and the horrible state of the roads, alone saved the Allies from a repetition of the disasters of Auerstadt and Jena. His right wing, under Lannes, was intended to cut Benningsen's army off from the great road through Pultusk: his centre, under Davoust, Augereau, Soult, and Murat, was destined to penetrate by Golymin and Makow to Ostrolenka, directly in the rear of that town, and two marches between Benningsen and the Russian frontier; while the left wing, under Ney, Bernadotte, and Bessières, was to interpose between Lestocq and the Russian centre, and throw him back into Eastern Prussia, where, driven up to the sea, he would soon, if the Russians were disposed of, be compelled, like Blucher,

29.
Object of
Napoleon in
these move-
ments.

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¹ Jom. ii.
340, 341.
Dum. xvii.
162, 164.

to surrender. A more masterly project never was conceived; it was precisely a repetition of the semicircular march of his left wing under Bernadotte, round Mack at Ulm; and the hesitation of Kamenskoi between an advance and a retrograde movement, served to offer every facility for the success of the enterprise. The celerity of the Russian retreat, the sacrifice of seventy pieces of their heavy artillery, the dreadful state of the roads, which impeded the French advance, and the impervious intervening country, which separated their numerous corps from each other, alone defeated this profound combination, and brought to Pultusk and Golymin, a few hours before the enemy, the corps which were there destined to fall upon their retreating columns, or bar the road to the frontiers of Russia.¹

30.
Description of
the field at
Pultusk, and
of the posi-
tions of the
two hostile
armies.

The position of Pultusk is the only one in that country where the ground is so far cleared of wood as to permit of any considerable armies combating each other in a proper field of battle. An open and cultivated plain on this side of the river Narew, there stretches out to the south and east of that town, which lies on the banks of its meandering stream. A succession of thickets surround this open space in all directions, excepting that on which the town lies; and on the inside of them the ground rises to a semicircular ridge, from whence it gradually slopes down towards the town on one side, and the forest on the other; so that it is impossible, till this barrier is surmounted, to get a glimpse even of the buildings. There the Russians were drawn up in admirable order in two lines; their left resting on the town of Pultusk, their right on the wood of Moszyn, which skirted the little plain, the artillery in advance; but a cloud of Cossacks swarmed in front of the array, and prevented either the force or composition of the enemy from being seen by the French as they advanced to the attack. Sacken had the command of the left; Count Osterman Tolstoy of the right; Barclay de Tolly, with twelve battalions and ten squadrons, occupied a copsewood in front of the right; Benningsen was stationed in the centre;—names destined to immortal celebrity in future wars, and which, even at this distant period,² the historian can

² Wilson, 77,
78. Jom. ii.
341. Dum.
xvii. 162, 165.

hardly enumerate without a feeling of exultation and the thrilling interest of former days.

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Lannes, with his own corps, and the division Gudin from that of Davoust—in all about thirty-five thousand men—resolved to force the enemy in this position, and for this purpose he, early on the morning of the 26th, advanced to the attack. The woods which skirted the little plain, occupied by the Russian light troops, in front of their position, were forced by the French voltigeurs after an obstinate resistance, and a battery which galled their advance, and which could not be withdrawn, was carried by assault. No sooner, however, had the French general, encouraged by this success, surmounted the crest of the ridge, and advanced into the open plain, than the cloud of Cossacks dispersed to the right and left, and exposed to view the Russian army drawn up in two lines, in admirable order, with a hundred and twenty guns disposed along its front. Astonished, but not panic-struck by so formidable an opposition, Lannes still continued to press forward, and as his divisions successively cleared the thickets and advanced to the crest of the hill, they deployed into line. This operation, performed under the fire of all the Russian cannon, to which the French had as yet none of equal number to oppose, was executed with admirable discipline, but attended with a very heavy loss, and the ground was already strewed with dead bodies when the line was so far formed as to enable a general charge to take place. It was attended, however, with very little success. The soil, cut up by the passage of so many horses and carriages, was in many places knee-deep of mud, heavy snow-showers at intervals obscured the heavens and deprived the French gunners of the sight of the enemy; while the Russian batteries, in position and served with admirable skill, alike in light and darkness sent their fatal storm of grape and round-shot through the ranks of the assailants. Notwithstanding these obstacles, however, the French advanced with their wonted intrepidity to the attack, and gradually the arrival of their successive batteries rendered the fire of cannon on the opposite sides more equal. Suchet, who commanded the first line, insensibly gained ground, especially on the right, where the division of Barclay

31.
Battle of
Pultusk.
Dec. 26.

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¹ Dum. xvii.
164, 168.
Jom. ii. 342.
Wilson, 79,
80. Rapp,
127.

was stationed; but Benningsen, seeing the danger, reinforced that gallant officer with fresh troops; a battalion of the French infantry was broken and cut to pieces by the Russian horse, and the rout in that quarter became so serious, that Lannes was compelled to advance in person with his reserve to repair the disorder. By his efforts the forward movement of the Russians in that direction was arrested, and their victorious columns, charged in flank, while disordered by the rapidity of their advance, were forced to give ground, and resume their former position in front of Pultusk.¹

32.
Which turns
out to the
disadvantage
of the French.

Meanwhile Suchet, on the left of the French, had commenced a furious attack on the advanced post in the wood on the right of the Russians, occupied by Barclay de Tolly. After a violent struggle the Russians were driven back; reinforced from the town, they again regained their ground, and drove the French out of the wood in disorder. Lannes, at the head of the 34th regiment, flew to the menaced point, and again in some degree restored the combat: but Barclay had regained his lost position and menaced the French extreme left. Osterman Tolstoy brought up the Russian reserve, and after a murderous conflict, which lasted long after it was dark, a frightful storm separated the combatants. Neither party could boast of decisive success; but the Russians remained masters of the field of battle till midnight, when they crossed the Narew by the bridge of Pultusk, and resumed their retreat in the most orderly manner; while the French also retreated to such a distance that next day the Cossacks who patrolled eight miles from the field of battle towards Warsaw, could discover no traces of the enemy. The losses were severe on both sides:—on that of the French they amounted to six thousand men; on that of the Russians to nearly five thousand; and the twelve guns which they lost in the morning were never regained.²

² Wilson, 79,
80. Jom. ii.
341, 342.
Dum. xvii.
168, 174.

33.
Combat of
Golymin.

On the same day on which this bloody battle took place at Pultusk, a serious conflict also occurred at Golymin, about thirty miles from the former field of battle. Davoust and Augereau, supported by a large party of Murat's cavalry, there attacked Prince Gallitzin, who, with fifteen battalions and twenty squadrons had taken

post at the entrance of the town to gain time for his artillery and carriages to defile through the forest in his rear. His force was successively augmented, however, in the course of the day by the arrival of other troops from Sacken and Doctoroff's corps, and before nightfall twenty-eight battalions and forty squadrons were assembled in line. Operations in that quarter began at daylight on the 24th, which in that inclement season was at eight in the morning; the bridge of Kollosump, over the Ukra, was carried by a brilliant charge by Colonel Savary; but that of Choczym resisted all the efforts of the French, and it was only when it became no longer tenable, from the number who had crossed at Kollosump, that orders for the evacuation of the post were given. Continuing his march all the succeeding day, Augereau found himself, on the morning of the 26th, in presence of Prince Gallitzin, who was advantageously posted on the right of Golymin. As the French battalions and squadrons successively arrived on the ground, and deployed to the right or left, they were severely galled by the Russian artillery stationed in front of their positions; but they bravely formed line, and advanced with their accustomed gallantry to the attack, though few of their guns could as yet be brought up to reply to the enemy. The resistance, however, was as obstinate as the assault was impetuous, and, despite all their efforts, the French, after several hours' hard fighting, had not gained any ground from the enemy. But while this severe conflict was going on in front, a division of Murat's cavalry, advancing on the road from Czarnowo, was discerned driving before it a body of Cossacks who had been stationed in that village; while a powerful mass of Davoust's infantry, which had broken up that morning from Stretzegoczin, joined the horse in front of Czarnowo, and their united mass, above fifteen thousand strong, bore down upon the troops of Gallitzin, already wearied by a severe combat of several hours' duration.¹

Dec. 24.

Dec. 26.

¹ Dum. xvii. 176, 182.
Wilson, 82.
Jom. ii. 842.
Rapp, 127.

This great addition to the attacking force must have proved altogether fatal to the Russian troops, had they not shortly after received considerable reinforcements from the corps of Doctoroff and Touchkoff, which in some degree restored the equality of the combat. Davoust, with the divisions Morand and Friant, so well known.

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from their heroic conduct on the plateau of Auerstadt, charged vehemently through the woods which skirted the open space in front of Golymin; throwing off their haversacks, the Russian infantry met them with the bayonet; but after repulsing the French advance they were themselves arrested by the murderous fire of the tirailleurs in the wood. Nearly encircled, however, by hourly increasing enemies, Prince Gallitzin withdrew his troops towards evening into the village, but there maintained himself with heroic constancy till nightfall, vigorously repulsing the repeated attacks of the conquerors of Jena and Auerstadt. Davoust, after occupying all the woods around the town, detached a brigade of horse to cut off the communication by the great road with Pultusk; and they succeeded in clearing the causeway of the Cossacks and light horse who were posted on it. But the French dragoons, following up their success, were assailed by so murderous a fire from the Russian voltigeurs, standing up to the middle in the marshes on either side of the road, that half their number were slain; General Rapp, while bravely heading the column, had his left arm broken, and the discomfited remnant sought refuge behind the ranks of their infantry. When night closed on this scene of blood, neither party had gained any decisive advantage; for if the French had taken twenty-six pieces of cannon and a large train of carriages which had stuck fast in the mud, the Russians still held the town of Golymin, and had inflicted upon them a loss of above four thousand men,* while they had not to lament the destruction of more than half the number, in consequence chiefly of their great superiority in artillery to their assailants. As the order for retreat still held good, Prince Gallitzin, at midnight, resumed his march for Ostrolenka.¹

¹ Rapp, 127,
128. Dum.
xvii. 183, 185.

Notwithstanding the obstinate resistance thus experienced by his lieutenants on both the roads on which his corps were advancing, and the unsatisfactory issue of the combats in which they had been engaged, Napoleon was still not without hopes of effecting the grand object of his

* The 47th Bulletin admits a loss of 800 killed and 2000 wounded on the part of the French at Golymin and Pultusk; and as their usual practice was to allow only a loss of a third to a fourth of its real amount, this would seem to imply that they lost on these occasions at least 10,000 or 12,000 men.—See 47th Bulletin in *Camp. en Prusse*, iii. 222.

designs, the isolating and surrounding the enemy's centre or left wing. On the extreme left of the French, Bernadotte and Ney had succeeded, after several severe actions, particularly one at Soldan, which was taken and retaken several times, and where the Prussians behaved with the most heroic resolution, in interposing between Lestocq and the Russian forces on the Ukra, and throwing the Prussian general back towards Königsberg. If Soult could have effected the movement on Makow which was prescribed to him, he would have been directly in the rear of the troops who had combated at Pultusk and Golymin, who must have been reduced to the necessity of laying down their arms, or cutting their way through against great odds. But the frightful state of the roads, which in many places were three feet deep of mud, and the rudeness of the season, which alternately deluged the marching columns with drenching rain, driving sleet, and melting snow, rendered it totally impossible for that enterprising officer to effect the forced marches necessary to outstrip and get into the rear of the enemy; and the Russians, retiring to Ostrolenka and Hohenstein, still found the line of their retreat open. On the 28th, Napoleon advanced his headquarters to Golymin; but having there received certain intelligence that the Russians must arrive at Makow before Soult could possibly get thither, he saw the object of the campaign was frustrated, and resolved to put his men into winter quarters. On that day, accordingly, he issued orders to stop the advance of the troops at all points; they were put into cantonments between the Narew and the Ukra, and the Emperor himself returned with the guards to Warsaw.¹

On the side of the Russians, repose had become nearly as necessary; the weather was as unfavourable to them as to the French; their infantry, equally with the enemy's, had shivered up to the knees in mud at Pultusk; their cavalry, equally with his, sank in the marshes of Golymin: the breaking up of the roads was more fatal to them than their opponents, as the guns or chariots which were left, necessarily fell into hostile hands; and experience had already begun to evince, what more extended observation has since abundantly confirmed,² that exposure to an inclement season was more fatal to the troops of the north

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35.

Napoleon stops his advance, and puts his army into winter quarters. Dec. 19 and 24.

Dec. 28.

¹ Dum. xvii. 185, 191. Jom. ii. 342, 343. Wilson, 82, 83.

36.

The Russians also go into winter quarters.

² Larrey's Surgical Campaign. Infra, c. lxxiii.

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¹ Dum. xvii.
191, 194.
Jom. ii. 344.

37.
Results of
this winter
campaign,
and impres-
sion which it
produces in
Europe.

than those of the south of Europe. In these circumstances it was with the most lively satisfaction that they perceived that Napoleon was disposed to discontinue the contest during the remainder of the rigorous season ; and their troops, retiring from the theatre of this bloody strife, were put into cantonments on the left bank of the Narew, after having evacuated the town and burned the bridge of Ostrolenka.¹

This desperate struggle in the forests of Poland in the depth of winter made the most lively impression in Europe. Independent of the interest excited by the extraordinary spectacle of two vast armies, numbering between them a hundred and fifty thousand combatants, prolonging their hostility in the most inclement season, and engaging in desperate conflicts amidst storms of snow, and when the soldiers on both sides were often sunk up to the middle in morasses, bivouacking for sixteen hours together without covering on the cold damp ground, or plunging fearlessly into streams swollen by the rains and charged with the ice of a Polish winter, there was something singularly calculated to awaken the passions in the result of this fearful contest. Both parties loudly claimed the victory : *Te Deum* was sung at St Petersburg ; the cannon of the Invalides roared at Paris ; and Benningsen, imitating in his official despatches the exaggerated accounts of the French bulletins, asserted a complete victory at Pultusk, under circumstances where a more faithful chronicler would only have laid claim to the honour of a divided combat. The French indignantly repelled the aspersion on their arms, and pointed with decisive effect to the cantonments of their troops, for evidence that the general result of the struggle had been favourable to their arms. But though there was no denying this, when the Russian troops, instead of having their advanced posts between the Bug and the Vistula, had now retired behind the Narew at Ostrolenka, still enough was apparent on the face of the campaign to excite the most vivid hopes on the one side, and serious apprehensions on the other, throughout Europe. It was not to win merely eighty miles of forest, interspersed with the wretched hamlets or squalid towns of Poland, that the Emperor had left Warsaw at the dead

of winter, and put so vast an army in motion over a line thirty leagues in length. There was no claiming of the victory on both sides at Austerlitz or Jena; the divided trophies of the late engagements indicated a struggle of a very different character from those which had preceded them; it was evident that the torrent of French conquest, if not arrested, had at least been stemmed. The interest excited by these events, accordingly, was intense over all the Continent, and still more so in England; and hopes began to be entertained that the obstinate valour of the North would at length arrest the calamities which had so long desolated Europe. Happy would it have been if the cabinet either of Vienna or St James's had improved on these dispositions, and taken advantage of the pause in the career of universal conquest, to render effectual aid to the powers who now threw the last die for the independence of Europe on the shores of the Vistula.¹

¹ Wilson, 82,
83. Dum.
206.

The French army, which was now put into winter quarters, amounted to one hundred and sixty thousand men, and was accompanied by forty thousand horse: so wonderfully had the levies in France and the allied states compensated the prodigious consumption of human life during the bloody battles and wasteful marches which had occurred since they arrived on the banks of the Saale. The cantonments, from the extreme right to left, extended over a space of fifty leagues, forming beyond the Vistula the chord of the arc which that river describes in its course from Warsaw to Dantzic. The left wing, under Bernadotte, was, from its position, most exposed to the incursions of the enemy; but no apprehensions were entertained of its being disquieted, as that marshal had fifty-five thousand men under his command, and could speedily receive succour, in case of need, from Marshal Ney, whose rallying point was Osterode, and who lay next to his right. The centre and right wing, nearly a hundred thousand strong, were almost detached from the left wing, and lay more closely together on either side of Warsaw. How to provide subsistence for so great a multitude amidst the forests and marshes of Poland was no easy matter; for its fertile plains, though the granary of Western Europe,² raise their admirable wheat crops only for exportation, and present, in proportion to their

38.
Positions of
the French
army in win-
ter quarters.

² Dum. xvii.
198, 208.
Jom. ii. 344.

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39.

Napoleon's
measures to
provide food
and secure his
cantonments.

extent of level surface, fewer resources for an army than any country in Europe. But it was in such subordinate, though necessary cares, that the admirable organisation and indefatigable activity of the Emperor shone most conspicuous.

Innumerable orders, which for a long time back had periodically issued from headquarters, had brought all the resources of Germany to the supply of the army in Poland. Convoys from all quarters were incessantly converging towards the Vistula, and supplies of every sort, not only for the maintenance of the soldiers, but for the sick and wounded, as well as the munitions of war, transported in many thousand carriages, were brought up from the Rhine and the Danube in abundance. So great was the activity in the rear of the army, that the roads through Prussia bore rather the appearance of a country enriched by the extended commerce of profound peace, than of a district lately ravaged by the scourge of war. Great hospitals were established at Thorn, Posen, and Warsaw; thirty thousand tents, taken from the Prussians, cut down into bandages for the use of the wounded; immense magazines formed all along the Vistula, and formidable intrenchments erected to protect the *têtes du pont* of Prague, Thorn, and Modlin on the Vistula, and Sierock on the Narew. Though the blockade of Dantzic was not yet formally commenced, yet it was necessary to neutralise the advantages which the enemy derived from the possession of so important a fortress on the right of their line; and for this purpose a French division, united to the contingent of Baden and the Polish levies, was formed into the tenth corps, and placed under the command of Marshal Lefebvre. It soon amounted to twenty-seven thousand men, and began to observe the fortresses of Dantzic and Colberg; while Napoleon evinced his sense of the dubious nature of the struggle in which he was engaged, by sending for his experienced lieutenant, Massena, from the scene of his easy triumphs amidst the sunny hills of Calabria, to a sterner conflict on the frozen fields of Poland.¹

¹ Jom. ii.
345. Dum.
xvii. 205, 208.
Ann. Reg.
1807, 3.

The repose of the army at Warsaw was no period of rest to the Emperor. Great care was taken to keep alive the spirits of the Poles, and conceal from them

the dubious issue of the late conflict ; and for this purpose it was announced that almost all the prisoners taken from the Russians had either been marched off for France, or already entered the ranks of the Grand Army ; while the eighty pieces of cannon, which they had been forced to leave behind them in their retreat, were ostentatiously placed before the palace of the republic. Orders were at the same time sent to Jerome to press the siege of the fortresses in Silesia which still remained in the hands of the Prussians. The pusillanimous and unaccountable surrender of Stettin and Custrin has already been mentioned ; * and in the consequences which immediately flowed from those disgraceful derelictions of duty, was soon made manifest of what vast importance it is that all officers, even in commands apparently not very considerable, should, under all circumstances, adhere to the simple line of duty, instead of entering into capitulations from the supposed pressure of political considerations. The transport of artillery and a siege equipage from the Rhine or the Elbe to the Oder would have taken a very long period, and prolonged the reduction of the interior line of the Prussian fortresses ; but the surrender of Custrin to the summons of a regiment of infantry and two pieces of cannon, enabled Vandamme speedily to surround Glogau with a formidable battering-train, which, before the first parallel was completed, induced its feeble governor to lower his colours.¹

From the vast military stores captured in that town, a battering-train for the reduction of Breslaw was immediately obtained, and forwarded along the Oder with such rapidity that, on the 15th December, the trenches before that place, the capital of Silesia, *à cheval* on the Oder, and fortress of the first order, were opened, and a heavy bombardment kept up upon the town. The defence, however, was much more creditable to the Prussian character, and proved of what inestimable importance it would have been to the monarchy had the French arms been in like manner delayed before the walls of the other fortresses. Twice during its continuance Prince Anhalt, who with a few battalions and

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40.

Successive reduction of the fortresses in Silesia.

Dec. 2.

¹ Dum. xvii.
217, 220.
Jom. ii. 220.
Ann. Reg.
1807, 22.

41.

Siege and fall of Breslaw.
Dec. 15.* *Ante*, Chap. xliii. § 71.

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1806.

Dec. 31.

¹ Dum. xvii.
214, 223.
Jom. ii. 250.
Ann. Reg.
1807, 22.

a levy of peasants still maintained himself in Upper Silesia, approached the besiegers' lines, and endeavoured to throw succours into the town; but on the first occasion his efforts were frustrated by the vigilance of the French and Bavarians, who formed the covering force; and in the last attack he was totally defeated, with the loss of two thousand men. Soon after, a severe frost deprived him of the protection of the wet ditches, and the governor, despairing of being relieved, and seeing the besiegers' succours rapidly and hourly augmenting by the arrival of military stores from Glogau, surrendered with the garrison of six thousand men; the private men being prisoners of war, the officers dismissed on their parole not to serve against France till exchanged. By this acquisition, three hundred pieces of cannon, and immense military stores of all sorts, fell into the hands of the conquerors.¹

42.
Capture of
Brieg and
Schweidnitz,
and total con-
quest of
Silesia.

Jan. 17.

² Dum. xvii.
95, 101.
Jom. ii. 251.

This great achievement made the reduction of the other fortresses in Silesia a matter of comparative ease, by furnishing, close at hand, all the resources necessary for their reduction. They were almost forgotten, accordingly, and fell without being observed into the hands of the invaders. Brieg surrendered almost as soon as it was invested. Kosel was taken in silence, after a siege of a few days. Napoleon, delighted with these acquisitions, which entirely secured the right flank of his army, and were of the greater importance from the menacing aspect of the force which Austria was collecting on the Bohemian frontier, named Jerome Buonaparte governor of the province of Silesia; and after having drawn all the resources out of its rich cities and powerful fortresses which they were capable of yielding, for the prosecution of operations against Dantzic and the strongholds on the Lower Vistula, despatched Vandamme, with twelve thousand men, to besiege Schweidnitz, Neiss, and Glatz, the only remaining towns in the upper province which still hoisted the Prussian colours.^{2*} The reduction of these

* As fast as these fortresses in Silesia fell into the hands of Napoleon, they were by his orders totally dismantled, and their fortifications razed to the ground. Their inhabitants were seized with consternation when they beheld these rigorous orders carried into full execution, and anticipated a total separation from the Prussian monarchy, to which they were much attached, from so complete a destruction of the barrier raised with so much care both against Austria and Russia. Nothing could more clearly demonstrate the determination of the

strong fortresses, which had been the object of several campaigns to the Great Frederick, did not take place for some months afterwards, and was hardly noticed by Europe amidst the whirl of more important events on the Lower Vistula.

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The task of reducing the fortified towns on the Lower Oder, and between that and the Vistula, was allotted to Marshal Mortier. He took a position, in the middle of December, at Anclam; and, upon his approach, the Swedish forces retired to Stralsund. While in this station he drew his posts round Colberg, and several skirmishes occurred with the Prussian garrison of that place. Matters remained in that situation till the end of January, when the blockade of that fortress was more closely established, which continued till the conclusion of the campaign. More important operations took place at Dantzic and Graudentz, the siege of both which places was much facilitated by the great military stores taken in the towns of Silesia. They were brought down the Oder to near its mouth, and thence transported by land to the neighbourhood of these fortresses; and with such vigour did Marshal Lefebvre push forward the operations, especially against the former of these towns, that before the end of January considerable progress had been made in the works.¹

43.
Operations
on the left
towards
Pomerania
and Dantzic.

¹ Dum. xvii.
223, 237.
Jom. ii. 387.

On the return of Napoleon to Warsaw, he received detailed accounts of the operations of Marmont in Illyria since the commencement of hostilities in October. For a long period, and during the time when it was understood that a negotiation was on foot between the two governments, a sort of tacit suspension of arms existed between the French marshal and the Russians; but when it was distinctly ascertained that hostilities had been resumed, the flames of war extended to the smiling shores of the Adriatic Sea. The Muscovites, strengthened by the arrival of Admiral Siniavin with a powerful squadron, resumed the offensive, and compelled Marmont to abandon the point of Ostro, and fall back on Old Ragusa,

44.
Operations of
Marmont in
Illyria.

French Emperor to reduce Prussia to the rank of a third-rate power; but the policy, with reference to the future interests both of France and Germany, of destroying the chief barrier of both against Muscovite aggression, was extremely doubtful.—See MONTVERAN, *Hist. Const. de la Situat. de l'Angleterre en 1816*, 147; and DUM. xvii. 99, 100.

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1806.

Sept. 29.

Sept. 30.
1 Dum. xvii.
240, 256.45.
Napoleon's
efforts to
stimulate the
Turks to
vigorous re-
sistance.

where he fortified himself in a strong position in front of the town, and resolved to await the arrival of his flotilla and reinforcements. Encouraged by this retrograde movement, the Russians, six thousand strong, supported by some thousand Montenegrins, advanced to the attack; but they were anticipated by the French general: and after a sharp action, the new levies were dispersed, and the regular troops compelled to take refuge within the walls of Castel Nuovo, after sustaining a loss of six hundred men.¹

At the same period, a courier from Constantinople brought intelligence of the declaration of war by the Porte against Russia. This was an event of the very highest importance, promising, as it did, to effect so powerful a diversion in the Russian forces; and Napoleon therefore resolved to improve to the uttermost so auspicious a change by contracting the closest alliance with the Turkish government. Though General Michelson had early gained considerable advantage, and was advancing towards Belgrade, which had fallen into the hands of Czerny George and the insurgent Servians, yet the disasters of the Prussian war had opened the eyes of the cabinet of St Petersburg, when it was too late, to the imprudence of which they had been guilty in engaging at once in two such formidable contests. Accordingly thirty-six battalions and forty squadrons (about twenty-five thousand men) were ordered to advance with all possible rapidity from the plains of Moldavia to the banks of the Bug. Desirous to derive every possible advantage from this great diversion, Napoleon sent instructions to his ambassador at Constantinople, General Sebastiani, to use the greatest efforts to induce the Turkish government to enter vigorously into the contest; while to Marshal Marmont he gave orders to send French officers into all the Ottoman provinces, with orders to do their utmost every where to rouse the Mussulman population against the Muscovite invaders.*

Jan. 2, 1807,

* These instructions to Marmont are well worthy of attention, both as evincing the views which Napoleon already entertained in regard to the Ottoman empire, and setting in a clear light his subsequent perfidious conduct in abandoning that power to the ambition of Russia, by the treaty of Tilsit. "A courier, just arrived from Constantinople, has announced that war against Russia is declared: great enthusiasm prevails at that capital, twenty regiments of Janissaries have just set out from its walls for the Danube, and twenty more will speedily follow

At the same time, the relations of France with Persia and Turkey were considered of such paramount importance, that they were made the subject of a special message to the senate, which declared "The Emperor of Persia, tormented, as Poland was for sixty years, by the intrigues of Russia, is animated by the same sentiments as the Turks. He has resolved to march upon the Caucasus to defend his dominions. Who could number the duration of the wars, the number of campaigns, which would be required one day to repair the calamities consequent upon the Russians obtaining possession of Constantinople? Were the tiara of the Greek faith raised again, and extended from the Baltic to the Mediterranean, we should see in our own days our provinces attacked by clouds of barbarians; and if, in that tardy struggle, civilised Europe should happen to fall, our culpable indifference would justly excite the reproaches of posterity, and would become a subject of opprobrium in history." Memorable words! when the events which subsequent times have brought about, and the objects of political apprehensions in our own time, are taken into view.¹

¹ Jom. ii.
345, 349.
Bign. vi. 121.

The residence of the French generals and officers at Warsaw appeared a perfect Elysium after the fatigues

from Asia. Sixty thousand men are at Hersova; Pashah Oglou has assembled twenty thousand at Widdin. Send immediately five engineer officers and as many of artillery to Constantinople—aid the pashas in every possible way with counsel, provision, and ammunition. It is not unlikely that I may send you with 25,000 men to Widdin, and there you will enter into connexion with the Grand Army, of which you would form the extreme right. Twenty-five thousand French, supported by sixty thousand Turks, would soon force the Russians not to leave 30,000 men on the Danube, as they have done, but to forward twice that number to defend their own frontiers in that quarter. Send twenty or thirty officers to the pashas, if they demand so many; but the period for the employment of troops is not yet arrived. The Turks may be relied on as faithful allies, because they hate the Russians, therefore be not sparing in your supplies of all sorts to them. An ambassador from Persia as well as Turkey has just been at Warsaw; the court of Ispahan also, as the sworn enemy of Russia, may be relied on as our friend. Our relations with the Eastern powers are now such that we may look forward *shortly to transporting 40,000 men to the gates of Ispahan, and from thence to the shores of the Indus*:—projects which formerly appeared chimerical are now no longer so, when I receive ambassadors from the Sultan, testifying a serious alarm at the progress of Russia, and the strongest confidence in the protection of France. In these circumstances, send your officers over all the Turkish provinces; they will make known my disposition towards the Grand Seigneur, and that will exalt the general enthusiasm, while at the same time you will be able to acquire for me information which may prove in the highest degree useful. In a word, general, *I am the sincere friend of Turkey, and wish to do it all the good in my power*; let that principle regulate all your actions. I consider the Turkish declaration of war against Russia as the most fortunate circumstance which could possibly have occurred in my present situation."—JOMINI, ii. 347-349.

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46.

Delightful
residence of
the French at
Warsaw.

and privations to which they had been exposed. The society of that capital is well known to be one of the most agreeable in Europe, from the extraordinary talents and accomplishments of the women of rank of which it is composed. No person can have mingled in those delightful circles without perceiving that the Polish women are the most fascinating in Europe. Endowed by nature with an ardent temperament, an affectionate disposition, and an exalted imagination, they have, at the same time, all the grace and coquetry which constitute the charm of Parisian beauty, and yet retain, at least in rural situations, the domestic virtues and simplicity of manner which nurse in infancy the national character of the English people.* Speaking every language in Europe with incomparable facility—conversing alternately in French, German, Italian, Russian, and sometimes English, with the accent of a native—versed in the literature and history of all these countries, and yet preferring to them all the ruins of their own wasted land—enthusiastic in their patriotism, and yet extended in their views—with hearts formed in the simplicity of domestic life, minds cultivated during the solitude of rural habitation, and manners polished by the elegance of metropolitan society—they approach as near as imagination can figure to that imaginary standard of perfection which constitutes the object of chivalrous devotion. Melancholy reflection! that the greatest charms of society should be co-existent with the most vicious and destructive national institutions; and that its principal excellencies should have been called forth by the miserable and distracted customs which had brought the Polish nation to a premature dissolution!¹†

¹ Personal
observation.
Savary, iii.
17.

If such are the attractions of Warsaw, even to a passing traveller, it may easily be believed what it appeared to the French officers after the storms of Pultusk and Goly-

* This observation applies to the character of the female part of the Polish rural nobility. Those who have made Warsaw or other great capitals their habitual residence, have too often contracted the vices incident to a polished and corrupted society.

† “It may with truth be said,” says Savary, “that the Polish women are fitted to inspire jealousy to the most accomplished ladies in the civilised world: they unite, for the most part, to the manners of the great world a depth of information which is rarely to be seen even among the French women, and which is infinitely superior to what is usually to be met with in the most

min. From all parts of Prussian Poland the great families flocked to her capital, and soon formed a society, in the midst of the horrors of war, which rivalled any in Europe in splendour and attractions. Abandoning themselves without reserve to the delightful prospects which seemed to be opening on their country, the Polish women saw in the French officers the deliverers of Sarmatia, the invincible allies who were to restore the glories of the Piasts and the Jagellons. A universal enthusiasm prevailed; fêtes and theatrical amusements succeeded each other in diversified magnificence; and, following the general bent, even the intellectual breast of Napoleon caught the flame, and did homage to charms which, attractive at all times, were, in that moment of exultation, irresistible. But these fairy scenes were of short duration; his pleasures never for a moment interfered with his duties; he was indefatigable in preparation during the short interval of repose; and war, in its most terrible form, was destined soon to arouse all from this transient period of enchantment.¹

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47.

Enthusiastic
reception of
the French
by the Polish
women.¹ Sav. iii. 17.

When the French were put into cantonments on the right bank of the Vistula, the situation of the Russian army was such, that it could hardly be said to have a commander. Kamenskoi retired far to the rear to Grodno, where he went out in his shirt to the streets, and gave unequivocal proofs of mental derangement. Buxhowden commanded his own corps, while Benningsen did the same with his; and the mutual jealousy of these officers for a time prevented the one from obeying the commands of the other: but at length the appointment of the latter to the supreme command restored unity to the operations of the army. Fortunately for the Russians, the suspension of hostilities, and the interval of fifteen leagues which separated their cantonments from those of the enemy, prevented them from suffering under this division of

48.

Kamenskoi
goes mad, and
Benningsen
assumes the
command.
He advances
against Ber-
nadotte.

accomplished urban society. It would appear, that being obliged to pass more than half the year on their estates, they devote themselves to reading and mental cultivation; and thence in the capitals, where they go to pass the winter, they so frequently appear superior to all their rivals."—SAVARY, iii. 17.

"I did not require to learn," says Duroc, "that the Polish women are the most agreeable in Europe; but it was not till I arrived in Poland that I became acquainted with the full extent of their charms. The attractions of Warsaw are indescribable. It contains several agreeable circles—one charming."—*Letter of Duroc to Junot, Dec. 17, 1806; D'ABRANTES, ix. 350.*

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council; and when Benningsen assumed the command, he resolved to carry out the design of Buxhowden, and, instead of allowing the army to repose in its cantonments, commence an offensive movement with the whole army against the French left under Bernadotte and Ney, which had extended itself so far as to menace Königsberg, the second city of the Prussian dominions, and the capital of the old part of the monarchy. Many reasons recommended this course. It was evident that Napoleon would turn to the best account the breathing time afforded him in winter quarters. His army would be recruited and strengthened, his cavalry remounted, his magazines replenished on the Vistula; the fortresses at its mouth were already observed; and when the mild season returned in May, there was every reason to fear that he would be as solidly established on the line of that river by the capture of Colberg, Graudentz, and Dantzic, as he was now on the Oder and in Silesia by the reduction of the fortresses of that province. And the situation of Bernadotte and Ney, who had extended their cantonments beyond what was

¹ Wilson, 83,
84. Dum.
xvii. 295, 297.
Jom. ii. 351.
Sav. iii. 26,
27.

either necessary or prudent, and in such a way as almost to indicate an offensive intention, suggested a hope, that by a rapid movement their corps might be isolated and destroyed before the bulk of the Grand Army, grouped round Warsaw, could advance to their relief.¹

49.
Rapid
advance of
Benningsen
towards
Königsberg.
Jan. 15.

Impressed with these ideas, the Russian army, seventy-five thousand strong, with five hundred pieces of cannon, was every where put in motion, crossed the Narew, and marched upon the Bohr. The corps of Benningsen and Buxhowden, so long separated, effected a junction at Biala on the 14th January: and on the 15th headquarters were established at that place. Essen was left with one division on the Narew to mask this forward movement; and there he was soon after joined by the divisions from Moldavia. This great assemblage of force was the more formidable, that it was entirely unknown to the enemy, being completely concealed by the great Forest of Johansberg and the numerous chain of lakes, intersected by woods, which lie between Arys in East Prussia, and the banks of the Vistula. Rapidly advancing, after its columns were united, the Russian army moved forward between the lakes of Sperding and Lowenthin; and on

the 17th headquarters were established at Rhein in East Prussia. Meanwhile the cavalry, consisting of forty squadrons under Prince Gallitzin, pushed on for the Alle, on the roads leading to Königsberg and Bischofstein: and on the other side of that river surprised and defeated the light horse of Marshal Ney, which had advanced in pursuit of Lestocq to Schippenhal, within ten leagues of Königsberg. Thus on the 20th January, the Russian army, perfectly concentrated, and in admirable order, was grouped in the middle of East Prussia, and was within six marches of the Lower Vistula, where it might either raise the blockade of Dantzic and Graudentz, or fall with a vast superiority of force upon Bernadotte or Ney, still slumbering in undisturbed security in their cantonments.¹

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Jan. 17.

Jan. 19.

Jan. 20.

¹ Wilson, 83,
85. Dum.
xvii. 295 302.
Jom. ii. 352.

Had Benningsen been aware of the scattered condition of Marshal Ney's corps, he might, by the admission of the French military historians, have destroyed the whole before it could by possibility have been united and put in a condition to give battle. As it was, great numbers of his detached bodies were made prisoners, and the conduct of the marshal in first, by his senseless incursions attracting the enemy, and then, by his undue dispersion, exposing himself to their attacks, drew down a severe reproof from Napoleon.* But a glance at the map must be sufficient to show that great and decisive success was at this moment within the grasp of the Russian general; and that if, instead of making a long circuit to reach the head of Marshal Ney's corps, scattered over a space of eighteen leagues, and drive it back upon its line of retreat towards Warsaw, he had boldly thrown himself, three days earlier, upon its flank, he would have separated it from the centre of the army, and driven both it and Bernadotte to a disastrous retreat into the angle formed by the Vistula and the Baltic Sea. The movement of Benningsen to the head of Ney's column, however, having prevented this, he turned his attention to Bernadotte, who had received intelligence of his approach, and had rapidly concentrated

50.

He surprises
Ney's corps.

* He severely blamed the marshal "for having, by an inconsiderate movement, attracted the enemy, and even endeavoured to engage Marshal Soult, who declined to follow him, in the same expedition. You will immediately resume the winter quarters prescribed for your corps, and take advantage of them to give rest to your cavalry, and repair, the best way you can, the fault you have committed."—DUM. xvii. 303.

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Jan. 22.

¹ Dum. xvii.
297, 307.
Jom. ii. 353.
Wilson, 84,
85.

51.
Bernadotte,
attacked near
Mohrungen,
escapes with
difficulty.

² Bign. vi.
115. Wilson,
85. Dum.
xvii. 307,
319. Jom.
ii. 353.

his corps from the neighbourhood of Elbing at MOHRUNGEN. Meanwhile the Russian army continued its advance; on the 22d, headquarters were established at Bischofstein, and the Cossacks pushed on to Heilberg; and on the same day, a severe action took place at Lecberg, from whence the French cavalry, under Colbert, were driven in the direction of Allenstein. Ney, now seriously alarmed, despatched couriers in all directions to collect his scattered divisions, and on the 23d resumed his headquarters at Neidenberg, extending his troops by the left towards Gilgenberg to lend assistance to Bernadotte.¹

Bernadotte, informed by despatches from all quarters of this formidable irruption into his cantonments, was rapidly concentrating his troops at Mohrungen, when Benningsen, with greatly superior forces, fell upon him. The French troops, eighteen thousand strong, were posted in rugged ground at Georgenthal, two miles in front of that town. General Makow attacked them with the advanced guard of the Russians, before sufficient forces had come up; and after a sanguinary conflict, in which the eagle of the 9th French regiment was taken and retaken several times, and finally remained in the hands of the Russians, suffered the penalty of his rashness by being repulsed towards Leibstadt. In this bloody affair both parties had to lament the loss of two thousand men, and the Russian general, Aurepp, was killed. It was the more to be regretted that this premature attack had been made, as Lestocq was at the moment at Wormditt, or five leagues distant on the right; Gallitzin, with five thousand horse, at All-Reichau, at the same distance on the left; Osterman Tolstoy at Heiligenthal, and Sacken at Elditten, all in the immediate neighbourhood; so that, by a concentration of these forces, the whole French corps might with ease have been made prisoners. As it was, Prince Michael Dolgorucki, who had been detached by Prince Gallitzin towards Mohrungen, in consequence of the violent fire heard in that direction, fell upon the rear of Bernadotte's corps, penetrated into the town, made several hundred prisoners, and captured all his private baggage, among which, to his eternal disgrace, were found, as in the den of a common freebooter, silver plate, bearing the arms of almost all the states in Germany,² ten thousand

ducats, recently levied for his own private use, and two thousand five hundred for that of his staff, from the town of Elbing.

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The narrow escape, both of Ney and Bernadotte, from total destruction in consequence of this bold and vigorous enterprise, excited the utmost alarm in the French army. The latter fell back rapidly towards Thorn on the Lower Vistula, by Deutch-Eylau, severely pressed by the Cossacks, who almost totally destroyed his rearguard, and made many thousand prisoners. Headquarters were advanced by Benningsen on the 26th to Mohrungen, where they remained, from the exhaustion of the troops, till the 2d February. Taking advantage of the aid thus obtained, the brave and active Lestocq succeeded in raising the blockade of Graudentz, the key to the Lower Vistula, and throwing in supplies of ammunition and provisions, which enabled that important fortress to hold out through all the succeeding campaign. The whole French left wing raised their cantonments, and fell back in haste, and with great loss, towards the Lower Vistula; and the alarm, spread as far as Warsaw, gave the most effectual refutation to the false accounts published in the bulletins of the successive defeats of the Russian army.* At the same time intelligence was received of the arrival of the Russian divisions from the army of Moldavia, on the Narew and the Bug, where they effected their junction with General Essen, and raised the enemy's force in that quarter to thirty thousand men.¹

52.
Graudentz is relieved, and the French left wing driven back by the Russians.

¹ Wilson, 86, 87. Dum. xvii. 307, 322. Bign. xi. 115, 116.

These untoward events made a great impression on the mind of Napoleon, who had never contemplated a renewal of active operations till his reinforcements from the Rhine had arrived at headquarters, and the return of the mild season had enabled him to resume hostilities without the excessive hardships to which his troops, during the later stages of the campaign, had been

53.
Dangerous situation of Napoleon.

* "In Bernadotte's baggage, taken at Mohrungen, were found curious proofs of the arrangements for stage effect and false intelligence, made by all the officers of the French army, from the Emperor downwards. An order was there found, giving the most minute directions for the reception of Napoleon at Warsaw, with all the stations and crossings where 'Vive l'Empereur!' was to be shouted; and official despatches of all the actions of the campaign in which Bernadotte had been engaged, for publication, and private despatches giving the facts as they really occurred, for the Emperor's secret perusal. These papers are still in the possession of General Benningsen's family."—WILSON'S *Polish Campaign*, 86—*Note*.

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exposed. The cold was still extreme : the Vistula and the Narew were charged with enormous blocks of floating ice, which daily threatened to break down the bridges over them ; the earth was covered with snow : the heavens exhibited that serene deep-blue aspect which indicated a long continuance of intense frost : magazines there were none in the country which was likely to become the theatre of war ; and though the highly cultivated territory of Old Prussia offered as great resources as any of its extent in Europe* for an invading army, yet it was impossible to expect that it could maintain, for any length of time, the enormous masses who would speedily be assembled on its surface. But there was no time for deliberation ; matters were pressing ; the right of Benningsen was now approaching the Lower Vistula, and in a few days the Russian army would raise the blockade of Dantzic, and, resting on that fortress as a base from whence inexhaustible supplies of all sorts might be obtained by sea, would bid defiance to all his efforts.¹

¹ Dum. xvii.
322, 324.
Jom. ii. 354.

54.
Vigour of
Napoleon in
assembling
his army.

Jan. 23.

It was in such a crisis that the extraordinary activity and indefatigable perseverance of Napoleon appeared most conspicuous. Instantly perceiving that active operations must be resumed even at that rude season, he despatched orders from the 23d to the 27th January, for the assembling of all his army ; and as, with the exception of Bernadotte and Ney, they all lay in cantonments not extending over more than twenty leagues, this was neither a tedious nor a difficult operation. Bernadotte was enjoined to assemble around Osterode, Lefebvre at Thorn to observe Dantzic, Soult at Pragnitz, Davoust at Pultusk, Ney at Neidenberg, Bessières and Murat at Warsaw with the Imperial Guard and cavalry. Though breathing only victory in his proclamations to

* The territory of Old Prussia is not naturally more fertile than the adjoining provinces of Poland, but nevertheless it is as rich and cultivated as they are sterile and neglected. On one side of the frontier line are to be seen numerous and opulent cities, smiling well-cultivated fields, comfortable hamlets, and an industrious and contented population ; on the other, endless forests of pine, wretched villages, a deplorable agriculture ; squalid huts beside a few gorgeous palaces. Nothing can more clearly demonstrate the vicious and ruinous political institutions which have prevailed amidst the mingled anarchy, tyranny, and democracy of Old Poland. This difference, so well known to travellers, repeatedly attracted the attention even of the military followers of the French army. See SEGUR, *Camp. de Russie*, i. 127 ; and JOMINI, ii. 354.

his troops, he in reality was making every preparation for defeat; Lefebvre received orders to collect all the forces at his disposal, without any regard to the blockade of Dantzic, in order to secure the fortress and bridge of Thorn, the direct line of retreat across the Vistula from the theatre of war, while Lannes was disposed as a reserve on the right, and Augereau on the left bank of that river. On the 27th, orders were given to all the columns to march, and early on the morning of the 30th the Emperor set out from Warsaw.^{1*}

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¹ Dum. xvii.
322, 325.
Jom. ii. 354,
355.

Following his usual plan of marching with the bulk of his forces, so as to get in the rear of the enemy during his advance, Napoleon moved towards Allenstein, where he arrived on the 2d February with the corps of Soult, Augereau, and Ney, while Davoust was at a short distance still further on his right, at Wartenberg. Already he had interposed between Benningsen and Russia; the only line of retreat which lay open to that officer was to the north-east, in the direction of Königsberg and the Niemen. The Russian army was stationed between the Passarge and the Alle, from Guffstadt and Heilsberg on the latter river, to Leibstadt and Wormditt in the neighbourhood of the former; but these movements of Napoleon induced Benningsen to concentrate his divisions and move them to the eastward, in the direction of Spiegelberg and the Alle, on the 1st and 2d of February, in order to preserve his communications with the Russian frontier. The whole troops assembled in order of battle on the following day, in a strong position on the heights of Jonkowo, covering the great road from Allenstein to Leibstadt, its right resting on the village of Mondtken. Napoleon instantly directed Davoust to march from Wartenberg to Spiegelberg with his whole corps, in order to get entirely round the left flank of the Russians in this position and attack them in rear;² while Soult received orders to force the bridge of Bergfried,

55.
Napoleon
marches for
the rear of
Benningsen.

Feb. 1 and 2.

Feb. 3.

² Wilson, 89,
90. Jom. ii.
355. Dum.
xvii. 330, 340.

* The orders given by Napoleon to all the marshals and chief officers of his army on this trying emergency, may be considered as a masterpiece of military skill and foresight, and deserve especial attention from all who desire to make themselves acquainted either with his extraordinary activity and resources, or the multiplied cares which, on such an occasion, devolve on a commander-in-chief.—See the whole in DUMAS, xvii. 330-374; *Pièces Just.*

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56.
Who discovers his design, and falls back.

Feb. 3.

by which their line of retreat and communications lay across the Alle.

It was all over with the Russians if these orders had been carried into full execution without their being aware how completely they were in course of being encircled. But by a fortunate accident the despatches to Bernadotte, announcing the design, and enjoining him to draw Benningsen on towards the Lower Vistula, had previously fallen into the hands of the Cossacks, and made that general aware of his danger. He immediately despatched orders to the officer at Bergfried to hold the bridge to the last extremity, which was so gallantly obeyed, that though Soult assailed it with all his corps, and it was taken and retaken several times, yet it finally remained in the hands of the Russians. The situation of Benningsen, however, was still very critical; he was compelled to fall back to avoid being turned in presence of very superior forces, and by his lateral movement from Mohrungen he had become entirely separated from Lestocq, who was in the most imminent danger of being cut off and destroyed by the superior forces of Bernadotte. Fortunately, however, from the despatches being intercepted, that marshal remained entirely ignorant, both of what was expected from him, and of the great advantages which remained in his power; and Lestocq, without being disquieted, was enabled to check his advance and make preparations for a retreat, which lay open to him from Freystadt, where he had been covering the revictualing of Graudentz, by Deutch-Eylau, Osterode, and Mohrungen to Leibstadt; while Benningsen himself, on the night of the 3d, broke up from Jonkowo, and retired in the same direction.¹

¹ Wilson, 89, 92. Jom. ii. 355, 356. Dum. xvii. 330, 349.

57.
The French pursue the Russians, who resolve to give battle.

By daybreak the French army, headed by Murat with his numerous and terrible dragoons, was in motion to pursue the enemy; and as the Russians had been much retarded during the night by the passage of so many pieces of cannon and waggons through the narrow streets of Jonkowo, the former soon came up with their rearguard. By overwhelming numbers the latter were at length forced from the bridge of Bergfried; but they rallied in the village, and, forming barricades with tumbrils, wag-

gons, and chariots, effectually checked the advance of the enemy until the carriages in the rear had got clear through. They then retired, obstinately contesting every inch of ground, which they did with such effect that the French lost fifteen hundred men in the pursuit, without inflicting a greater loss on their adversaries. Nor were any cannon or chariots taken—a striking proof of the orderly nature of the retreat, and the heroism with which the rearguard performed its duty, when it is recollected that Napoleon, with eighty thousand men, thundered in close pursuit; and that, from the state of the roads, the march, which had been ordered upon three lines, could take place on two only. Soult and Davoust continued to manœuvre, in order to turn the Russian left, while Murat and Ney pressed their rearguard. On the night of the 4th, the Feb. 4. Russians retired to Frauendorf, where they stood firm next day. But this continued retreat in presence of the enemy was now beginning to be attended with bad effects, both upon the health and spirits of the soldiers. The Russian commissariat was then wretched; magazines there were none in the country which was now the theatre of war; and the soldiers, when worn out with a night-march over frozen snow, had no means of obtaining subsistence but by prowling about to discover and dig up the little stores which the peasants had buried for the use of their families. The men every where lay on the bare ground in intense frost, with no other bed but the snow, and no covering but their great-coats, which were now little better than rags. They were not as yet inured to retire before the enemy; and the murmur against any further retreat was so loud, that Benningsen resolved to fall back only to a chosen field of battle; and, upon examining the map, that of PREUSSICH-EYLAU was selected for this purpose. No sooner was this announced to the troops than their discontents were appeased, the hardships of the night-marches were forgotten, and from the joyful looks of the men it would rather have been supposed they were marching to tranquil winter quarters, than to the most desperate struggle which had occurred in modern times.¹

¹ Wilson, 92,
94. Jom. ii.
356. Dum.
xvii. 349, 352.

Severe actions, however, awaited these brave men ere they reached the theatre of final conflict. On the night

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58.

Combat of
Landsberg.
Feb. 6.

of the fifth the army moved to Landsberg, where the troops from Heilsberg joined them, notwithstanding a bloody combat with Marshal Davoust. On the following day, the rearguard, under Bagrathion, posted between Hoff and that town, was assailed with the utmost vehemence by Murat, at the head of the cavalry and the principal part of the corps of Soult and Augereau. The approach of these formidable masses, and the imposing appearance of their cavalry, as well as the balls which began to fall from the French batteries, occasioned great confusion among the cannon and carriages in the streets of the town. But with such resolution did the rearguard maintain their position, that though they sustained a heavy loss, the enemy were kept at bay till night closed the carnage, and relieved the Russian general from the anxieties consequent on so critical a situation in presence of such enormous forces of the enemy. Two battalions of Russians were trampled under foot in the course of the day or cut down, chiefly by one of their own regiments of horse dashing over them, when broken and flying from Murat's dragoons. Benningsen upon this supported the rearguard by several brigades of fresh troops, and the combat continued with various success till night, when both armies bivouacked in presence of each other; that of the French on the heights of Hoff, that of the Russians on those which lie in front of Landsberg, and the little stream of the Stein separating their outposts from each other. In this untoward affair the Russians sustained a loss of two thousand five hundred men, among whom was Prince Gallitzin, whose chivalrous courage had already endeared him to the army; but the French were weakened by nearly as great a number. During the night the whole army again broke up, and, without further molestation, reached Preussich-Eylau at seven the next morning, when it passed through the town, and moved quietly to the appointed ground for the battle on the other side, where it arrived by noonday.¹

Feb. 7.
¹ Dum. xvii.
354, 355.
Wilson, 94,
95. Jom. ii.
356.

59.
Combat of
Leibstadt,
and retreat of
Lestocq.

This rapid concentration and retreat of the Russians isolated the Prussian corps of Lestocq, and gave too much reason to fear that it might be cut off by the superior forces of Bernadotte or Ney, who were now pressing on it on all sides. But the skilful movements of the Prussian

general extricated him from a most perilous situation. On the 5th, he set out from Mohrungen, and his horse encountered the cavalry of Murat near Deppen, while the head of the column of infantry was at the same time charged by Ney, who had crossed the Passarge to intercept his progress near Waltersdorf. The heroic resistance of the advanced guard, only three thousand strong, gave time for the main body to change the line of its march, and escape in the direction of Schlodein; but it proved fatal to itself, as almost the whole were slain or made prisoners, with twelve pieces of cannon. The firm countenance of the cavalry, however, defeated all the efforts of Murat, who in vain charged them repeatedly with six thousand horse; and after baffling all his attacks, they retired leisurely, and in the best order, covering the march of the infantry all the way; crossed the Passarge at Spandau, and arrived on the 7th in safety at Hussehnien in the neighbourhood of Preussich-Eylau.¹

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Feb. 5.

Feb. 7.
1 Jom. ii.
356, 357.
Dum. xvii.
352, 353.

Thus, after sustaining incredible hardships, and undergoing serious dangers, the whole Russian army was at length concentrated in one field of battle, and about to measure its strength with the enemy. It was reduced, by the fatigues and losses of this winter campaign, to sixty-five thousand men, assembled around Eylau, to which, if ten thousand be added as Lestocq's division, which might be expected to co-operate in the approaching action, the whole amount that could be relied on for the shock was seventy-five thousand, with four hundred and sixty pieces of cannon. The French, after deducting the losses of this dreadful warfare, exclusive of Bernadotte, who did not arrive on the ground for two days after, could still bring eighty-five thousand men into the field, including nearly sixteen thousand horse; but they had not above three hundred and fifty pieces of artillery.* Thus the two armies were nearly equal—the French superiority in numbers, and especially in cavalry, being counterbalanced by the advantage which the Russians had in that important arm, the artillery. Their spirit and courage were at the same level; for if the French could recall with deserved pride the glorious achievements of the campaign, and a

60.
Relative
forces on both
sides.

* The following is the account given by Dumas of the troops present in arms, in January 1807, under Napoleon on the Vistula:—

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¹ Dum. xviii.
10. Wilson,
98, 99.

61.

Bloody com-
bats round
Eylau the
day before the
battle.

Feb. 7.

long course of almost unbroken victories, the Russians, on their side, had the triumphs of Suwarroff in Turkey, Poland, and the Italian plains, to recall: and if the former were impelled by the ardour of a revolution, converted by consummate genius into that of military conquest, the latter were buoyant with the rising energy of an empire whose frontiers had never yet receded before the standards of an enemy.¹

The Russian rearguard, ten thousand strong, under Bagrathion, was leisurely retiring towards Eylau, and at the distance of about two miles from that village, when it was attacked by the French infantry. The Russians were at first compelled to give way, but the St Petersburg dragoons, whose rout had occasioned such loss to their own comrades on the preceding day, emulous to wipe away their disgrace, assailed the enemy so opportunely in flank, when emerging from the tumult of the charge, that they instantly cut to pieces two battalions, and made prize of their eagles. Disconcerted by this check, the French gave no further molestation to the Russian rearguard, which retired into Eylau. By a mistake, however, the division destined to occupy that important station evacuated it, along with the rest of the army; and though Benningsen instantly ordered it to be reoccupied by fresh troops, the French had, meanwhile, entered in great numbers, and the assailing division, under Barclay de Tolly, had a rude contest to encounter in endeavouring

	Infantry and Artillery.	Cavalry.
Imperial Guard under Bessières,	9109	3829
————— ———— Oudinot,	6046	
First Corps, Bernadotte,	18,073	950
Third do. Davoust,	19,000	757
Fourth do. Soult,	26,329	1495
Fifth do. Lannes,	16,720	1399
Sixth do. Ney,	15,158	881
Cavalry do. Murat,	753	14,868
Total on the Vistula,	113,188	24,179
Detached, viz., Mortier, in Pomerania,	15,868	1,254
————— Jerome and Vandamme,		
in Silesia,	18,232	2,207
————— Lefebvre, Dantzic,	23,248	547
————— Hanover, Dumonceau,	6,898	689
Total,	177,434	28,876

If from this mass of 113,000 infantry, and 24,000 cavalry, there be deducted 20,000 absent, under Bernadotte, 18,000 under Lannes, and 14,000 lost or left behind during the march from Warsaw, there will remain, on their own showing, 85,000 in line at Eylau, and that agrees nearly with Sir Robert Wilson's estimate.—DUMAS, vol. xviii. 592; WILSON, 99.

to regain the lost ground. By vast exertions, however, they at length succeeded in expelling the enemy. The French again returned in greater force; the combat continued with the utmost fury till long after sunset. Fresh reinforcements came up to the Russians: twice Barclay carried the village after dark, by the light of the burning houses, and he was as often expelled by the enthusiastic valour of the French. At length they were driven out of the town, which, from lying in a hollow, and being commanded on the French side, was no longer tenable after the enemy had brought up their heavy artillery. But that gallant commander, with this heroic rearguard, intrenched himself in the church and churchyard, which stands on an eminence by the road on issuing from the town on the other side, and there maintained a sanguinary resistance till past ten at night, when he was severely wounded. Then the object of the strife having been gained by the heavy artillery having all arrived by the road of Schloditten, and taken up its position on the field of battle behind the village, the unconquered Russians were withdrawn from the churchyard, which, with its blood-stained graves and corpse-cased slopes, remained in the hands of Napoleon.¹

¹ Wilson, 97, 98, 100.
Jom. ii. 357.
358. Dum.
xviii. 6, 8.
Bign. vi. 126.

Never in the history of war did two armies pass a night under more awful and impressive circumstances than the rival hosts that now lay, without tent or covering, on the snowy expanse of the field of Eylau. The close vicinity of the two armies; the vast multitude assembled in so narrow a space, intent only on mutual destruction; the vital interests to the lives and fortunes of all which were at stake; the wintry wildness of the scene, cheered only by the watch-fires, which threw a partial glow on the snow-clad heights around; the shivering groups who in either army lay round the blazing fires, chilled by girdles of impenetrable ice; the stern resolution of the soldiers in the one array, and the enthusiastic ardour of those in the other; the liberty of Europe now brought to the issue of one dread combat; the glory of Russia and France dependent on the efforts of the mightiest armament that either had yet sent forth, all contributed to impress a feeling of extraordinary solemnity, which reached the most inconsiderate breast,

62.
Anxious situation of both armies in their night bivouac.

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¹ Wilson,
101. Jom. ii.
358.6.
Description
of the field of
battle, and
the positions
of either
army.

oppressed the mind with a feeling of anxious thought, and kept unclosed many a wearied eyelid in both camps, notwithstanding the extraordinary fatigues of the preceding days. But no sooner did the dawn break, and the quick rattle of musketry from the outposts commence, than these gloomy presentiments were dispelled, and all arose from their icy beds with no other feelings but those of joyous confidence and military ardour.¹

The evacuation of Eylau on the preceding night, had led Napoleon to suppose that the enemy were not to give battle on the succeeding day; and, overwhelmed with the extraordinary fatigues he had undergone since leaving Warsaw, during which time he had been daily occupied in business or marching twenty hours out of the twenty-four, he retired to a house in the town, and there, amidst all the horrors of a place carried by assault, fell into a profound sleep. The two armies were within half cannon-shot of each other, and their immense masses disposed in close array on a space not exceeding a league in breadth. The field of battle consisted of an open expanse of unenclosed ground, rising into swells, or small hills, interspersed with many lakes; but as the whole surface was covered with snow, and the water so thoroughly frozen as to bear any weight either of cavalry or artillery, it was every where accessible to military operations. The Russian right, under Touchkoff, lay on either side of Schloditten; the centre, under Sacken, occupied a cluster of little open hills, intercepted by lakes, in front of Kuschnitten; the left, under Osterman Tolsoy, rested on Klein-Saussgarten; the advanced guard, ten thousand strong, with its outposts extending almost to the houses of Eylau, was under the command of Bagrathion; the reserve, in two divisions, was led by Doctoroff. The whole army in front was drawn up in two lines with admirable precision; the reserve, in two close columns behind the centre; the foot artillery, consisting of four hundred pieces, was disposed along the front of the lines; the horse artillery, embracing sixty guns, cavalry and Cossacks, under Platoff, in reserve behind the centre and wings, in order to support any point which might appear to require assistance. Lestocq, with his division, had not yet come up;² but he had

² Dum. xviii.
12, 13. Jom.
ii. 359, 360.
Wilson, 101.

lain at Hussehnien the preceding night, which was only three leagues off, and might be expected to join before the battle was far advanced.

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The French position, generally speaking, was more elevated than that of the Russians, with the exception of the right, where it was commanded by the heights of Klein-Saussgarten. The town of Eylau, however, occupied in force by their troops, was situated in a hollow, so low that the roofs of the houses were below the range of cannon-shot from the Russian position, and the summit of the church steeple, which stands on an eminence, alone was exposed to the destructive storm. Davoust was on the right, and received orders to attack the villages of Klein-Saussgarten and Serpallen, occupied by the enemy. Soult, in the centre, was destined to advance against the Russian main body and the strong batteries placed opposite to Eylau: Augereau was on the left, to aid him when he moved forward; the Imperial Guard and cavalry of Murat were in reserve behind the centre, ready to support any attack which might appear likely to prove unsuccessful. Orders had been despatched to Ney to attack the Russian right as soon as the action was warmly engaged; and it was hoped he would arrive on the field at least as soon as Lestocq on the other side, upon whose traces he had so long been following. Lannes had been detained by sickness at Pultusk, and his corps, placed under the orders of Savary, afterwards Duke of Rovigo, was observing the Russian forces left on the Bug and the Narew. Napoleon's design, when he saw that the Russians stood firm, and were resolved to give battle, was to turn their left by the corps of Marshal Davoust, and throw it back on the middle of the army; but the better to conceal this object he commenced the action soon after daylight by a violent attack on their right and centre. The Russian cannon played heavily, but rather at hazard, on the hostile masses in front of Eylau; while the French guns replied with fatal effect from their elevated position down upon the enemy, whose lines were exposed from head to foot to the range of their shot.¹

64.
Distribution
of the French
forces.

¹ Wilson,
101. Jom. ii.
360, 361.
Dum. xviii.
9, 15.

Presently the left, under Augereau, advanced in massy columns towards Schloditten; while Soult's corps, preceded by a hundred and fifty pieces of artillery, marched

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65.

Battle of Eylau.
Defeat of Augereau.
Feb. 8.

with an intrepid step against the Russian centre, and forty guns of the Imperial Guard, posted on an eminence near the church of Eylau, to cover their attack, opened a heavy fire on the great central Russian battery. These troops had not advanced above three hundred yards, driving the Russian tirailleurs before them, when the Russian cannon-shot, from two hundred pieces, admirably directed, ploughed through the mass, and so shattered it, that the whole body inclined to the left, to get under the shelter of a detached house which stood in the way. A snow-storm at the same time set in and darkened the atmosphere, so that neither army could see its opponent; but nevertheless the deadly storm of bullets continued to tear the massy columns of the French left; and the cannonade was so violent as to prevent Soult from rendering them any effectual support. Augereau's divisions were already severely shaken by this murderous fire, when they were suddenly assailed on one side by the right wing of the Russians, under Touchkoff, and on the other by their reserve and a powerful body of cavalry, under Doctoroff. So thick was the snow-storm, so unexpected the onset, that the assailants were only a few yards distant, and the long lances of the Cossacks almost touching the French infantry, when they were first discerned. The combat was not of more than a few minutes' duration: the corps, charged at once by foot and horse with the utmost vigour, broke and fled in the wildest disorder back into Eylau, closely pursued by the Russian cavalry and Cossacks, who made such havoc, that the whole, above sixteen thousand strong, were, with the exception of fifteen hundred men, taken or destroyed; and Augereau himself, with his two generals of divisions, Desgardens and Heudelet, desperately wounded.¹

¹ Wilson,
101, 102.
Jom. ii. 361.
Dum. xviii.
17, 18. Bign.
vi. 129, 130.

66.

Imminent
danger of
Napoleon.

Napoleon was apprised of this disaster by the torrent of fugitives which rushed into Eylau; and the snow-storm clearing away at the same time, showed him the Russian right and centre far advanced, with their light troops almost at the edge of the town. He himself was stationed at the churchyard on its eastern side, which had been the scene of such a sanguinary conflict on the preceding night; and already the crash of the enemy's balls on the steeple and walls of the church showed how

near danger was approaching. Presently one of the Russian divisions, following rapidly after the fugitives, entered Eylau by the eastern street, and charged, with loud hurrahs, to the foot of the mount where the Emperor was placed with a battery of the Imperial Guard and his personal escort of a hundred men. Had a regiment of horse been at hand to support the attack, Napoleon must have been made prisoner; for though the last reserve, consisting of six battalions of the Old Guard, were at a short distance, he might have been enveloped before they could come up to his rescue. The fate of Europe then hung by a thread, but in that terrible moment the Emperor's presence of mind did not forsake him; he instantly ordered his little body-guard, hardly more than a company, to form line, in order to check the enemy's advance, and despatched orders to the Old Guard to attack the column on one flank, while a brigade of Murat's horse charged it on the other. The Russians, disordered by success, and ignorant of the inestimable prize which was almost within their grasp, were arrested by the firm countenance of the little band of heroes who formed Napoleon's last resource; and before they could re-form their ranks for a regular conflict, the enemy were upon them on either flank, and almost the whole division was cut to pieces on the spot.¹*

¹ Bign. vi.
130. Dum.
xviii. 19, 20.
Jom. ii. 362,
363. Wilson,
101, 102.

The disorder produced by the repulse of Soult and the almost total destruction of Augereau's corps, however, was such, that the French Emperor was compelled to strain every nerve to repair it. For this purpose he prepared a grand charge by the whole cavalry and Imperial Guard, supported by the divisions of Soult, which were again formed and led back to the attack. The onset of this enormous mass, consisting of fourteen thousand cavalry, and twenty-five thousand foot-soldiers,

67.

Grand charge
by the caval-
ry and Impe-
rial Guard on
the Russian
centre.

* "I never was so much struck with any thing in my life," said General Bertrand at St Helena, "as by the Emperor at Eylau at the moment when, alone with some officers of his staff, he was almost trodden under foot by a column of four or five thousand Russians. The Emperor was on foot; and Berthier gave orders instantly for the horses to be brought forward; the Emperor gave him a reproachful look, and instead ordered a battalion of his Guard, which was at a little distance, to advance. He himself kept his ground as the Russians approached, repeating frequently the words, 'What boldness! what boldness!' At the sight of the grenadiers of his Guard the Russians made a dead pause; the Emperor did not stir, but all around him trembled."—LAS CASES, ii. 151. See also *Relation de la Bataille d'Eylau, par un Témoin Oculaire*. *Camp. en Prusse et Pol.* iv. 45.

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supported by two hundred pieces of cannon, was the more formidable, that the thick storm of snow, as favourable now to them as it had before been to the enemy, prevented them from being perceived till they were close upon the first line of the enemy. The shock was irresistible: the front line of the Russians was forced to give ground, and in some places thrown into disorder; their cavalry crushed by the enormous weight of the seventy squadrons which followed the white plume of Murat; and a desperate *mêlée* ensued, in which prodigious losses were sustained on both sides. The Russian battalions, though broken, did not lay down their arms or fly, but falling back on such as yet stood firm, or uniting in little knots together, still maintained the combat with the most dogged resolution. Instantly perceiving the extent of the danger, Benningsen, with his whole staff, galloped forward from his station in the rear to the front, and at the same time despatched orders to the whole infantry of the reserve to close their ranks, and advance to the support of their comrades engaged. These brave men, inclining inwards, pressed eagerly on, regardless of the shower of grape and musketry which fell on their advancing ranks, and, uniting with the first line, charged home with loud hurrahs upon the enemy. In the shock Essen's Russian division was broken, and the French horse, pursuing their advantage, swept through several openings, and got as far as the reserve cavalry of Benningsen. But no sooner did Platoff see them approaching with loud cries, and all the tumult of victory, than he gave orders to the Cossacks of the Don to advance. Regardless of danger, the children of the desert joyfully galloped forward to the charge, their long lances in rest, their blood-horses at speed: in an instant the French cuirassiers were broken, pierced through, and scattered. Retreat was impossible through the again closed ranks of the enemy, and eighteen only of the whole body regained their own lines by a long circuit; while five hundred and thirty Cossacks returned, each cased in the shining armour which they had stripped from the dead bodies of their opponents.¹ At all other points the enemy were, after a desperate struggle, driven

¹ Dum. xviii.
19, 30. Jom.
ii. 362. Wil-
son, 103, 104.

back ; and several eagles, with fourteen pieces of cannon, remained in the hands of the victors.

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The battle appeared gained : the French left and centre had been defeated with extraordinary loss ; their last reserves, with the exception of part of the Guard, had been engaged without success ; to the cries of *Vive l'Empereur !* and the shouts of enthusiasm with which they commenced the combat, had succeeded a sullen silence along the whole line in front of Eylau ; the Russians were several hundred paces in advance of the ground which they occupied in the morning ; and a distant cannonade on both sides evinced the exhaustion and fatigue which was mutually felt. Lestocq had not yet arrived, but he was hourly and anxiously expected, and the addition of his fresh and gallant corps would, it was hoped, enable Benningsen to complete the victory. But while all eyes were eagerly turned to the right, where it was expected his standards would first appear, a terrible disaster, wellnigh attended with fatal consequences, took place on the left. Davoust, who was intrusted with the attack which was intended to be the decisive one in that quarter, had long been delayed by the firm countenance of Bagavout and Osterman Tolstoy ; but at length the increasing numbers and vigorous attacks of the French prevailed, and the village of Klein-Saussgarten fell into their hands. It was again reconquered by the Russians, but finally remained in the possession of their antagonists.¹

68.
Great success
of Davoust on
the French
right.

¹ Wilson,
104. Dum.
xvii. 20, 25.
Jom. ii. 363.

Nor was the action less warmly contested, nor attended with less disaster to the Russians, at Serpallen. Supported by a battery of thirty pieces of artillery, Bagavout there for three hours made head against the superior forces of St Hilaire and Morand at the head of two of Davoust's best divisions. At length the two lines advanced to within pistol-shot, when the Russians gave way ; the cannoniers, bravely resisting, were bayoneted at their guns, and the pieces were taken, when they were reinforced by two regiments which Benningsen sent to their support, and the French, in their turn, were charged in flank by cavalry, broken, and driven back upwards of three hundred yards. But notwithstanding this success

69.
Bagavout is
defeated on
the Russian
left.

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¹ Wilson,
104, 105.
Dum. xviii.
21, 29. Jom.
ii. 363, 364.

70.
Benningesen
throws back
his left to
arrest the
evil.

² Wilson,
104, 105.
Jom. ii. 363,
364. Dum.
xviii. 21, 29.

at Serpallen, the progress of the enemy at Klein-Sauggarten was so alarming, that the Russians were unable to maintain themselves on the ground they had so gallantly regained. Friant debouched in their rear in great strength, and, rapidly continuing his advance from left to right of the Russian position, he had soon passed, driving every thing before him, the whole ground occupied by their left wing; the guns so fiercely contested were abandoned by the Russians; and, continuing his triumphant course in their rear, he carried by assault the hamlet of Anklappen, and was making dispositions for the attack of Kuschnitten, which had been the headquarters of Benningesen during the preceding night, and lay directly behind the Russian centre. Never was change more sudden; the victorious centre, turned and attacked both in flank and rear, seemed on the point of being driven off the field of battle; already the shouts of victory were heard from Davoust's divisions, and vast volumes of black smoke, blown along the whole Russian centre and right from the flames of Serpallen, evinced in frightful colours the progress of the enemy on their left.¹

The firmness of Benningesen, however, was equal to the emergency. Orders were despatched to the whole left wing to fall back, so as to come nearly at right angles to the centre and right; and although this retrograde movement, performed in presence of a victorious enemy, was necessarily attended with some disorder, yet it was successfully accomplished; and after sustaining considerable loss, the Russian left wing was drawn up, facing outwards, nearly at right angles to the centre, which still retained its advanced position, midway between the ground occupied by the two armies where the fight began in the morning. As the Russian left drew back to the neighbourhood of the centre, it received the support of the reserves, while Benningesen wheeled about to the assistance of the discomfited wing; and although St Hilaire carried Kuschnitten, this was the last advantage he gained in that quarter, and the victorious columns of Davoust were at length arrested.²

The battle was in this critical state, with the French victorious on one wing and the Russians on the centre and the other, but without any decisive advantage to

either side, when the corps of Lestocq, so long expected, at length appeared on the extreme Russian right, driving before him the French battalions which were stationed near the village of Altholf. Orders were immediately despatched to him to defile as quickly as possible in the rear of the Russian right, so as to assist in the recapture of Kuschnitten behind their centre, where St Hilaire had established himself in so threatening a manner. These directions were rapidly and ably performed. Moving swiftly over the open ground in the rear of the Russian right in three columns, he arrived in the neighbourhood of Kuschnitten an hour before it was dark, with seven thousand men, having left two thousand to occupy Altholf, and lost nearly a thousand in the course of the march that morning, which had been a constant fight with Marshal Ney's corps. Dispositions for attacking the village and cutting off the retreat of the enemy were instantly made. A terrible cannonade was kept up on its houses, and the Prussians, under cover of the guns, charging in three columns, carried it with irresistible force, destroying or making prisoners the 51st and one battalion of the 108th regiments stationed there, with an eagle, and recovering the Russian guns which had been abandoned on the retreat from Serpallen. Not content with this great success, Lestocq immediately re-formed his divisions in line, with the cavalry and Cossacks in rear, and advanced against the hamlet of Ank-lappen and the wood adjoining. The division of Friant, wearied by eight hours' fighting, was little in a condition to withstand these fresh troops, flushed by so important an advantage. The combat, however, was terrible: Davoust was there, his troops, though exhausted, were more than double the numbers of the enemy, and he made the utmost effort to maintain his ground—"Here," said the marshal, "is the place where the brave should find a glorious death; the cowards will perish in the deserts of Siberia." Notwithstanding all his exertions, however, Friant was driven out of the wood, after an hour's combat, with the loss of three thousand men; the Russians, by a bold attack of cavalry, regained the smoking walls of Anklappen, and the whole Allied line was pressing on in proud array,¹ driving the enemy before them over the

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71.

Lestocq at
length
appears on
the Russian
right, and
restores the
battle.

¹ Dum. xviii.
30, 35.
Wilson, 105,
106. Jom.
ii. 364, 365.

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72

Schloditten is
carried by
Ney, and
retaken by
Benningesen.

the open ground between that ruin and Saussgarten, when night drew her sable mantle over this scene of blood.

The battle was over on the centre and left, and already the French lines were illuminated by the fire of innumerable bivouacs, when both armies were startled by a sharp fire, succeeded by loud shouts, on the extreme right of the Russians, towards Schloditten. It was occasioned by Marshal Ney's corps, which, following fast on the traces of Lestocq, had at nightfall entered Altholf, driving the Prussian detachment which occupied it before him, and had now carried Schloditten, so as to interrupt the Russian communications with Königsberg. Benningesen immediately ordered the Russian division of Kamenskoi, which had suffered least in the preceding action, to storm the village, which was executed at ten at night in the most gallant style. The loud cheers of their victorious troops were heard at Preussich-Eylau; and Napoleon, supposing that a general attack was commencing, for which he was little prepared, gave orders for his heavy artillery and baggage to defile towards Landsberg, and ordered Davoust to draw back to the position which he had occupied in front of the wood when the action commenced in the morning, and this terminated the changes of this eventful day.¹

¹ Wilson,
106, 107.
Dum. xviii.
35, 37. Jom.
ii. 365. Bign.
vi. 133, 134.

73.
Benningesen,
contrary to
the wishes of
his officers,
resolves to
retreat.

From the mortification, however, of retiring for the first time in his life before an enemy in an open field, Napoleon was relieved by the measures adopted by the Russian general. At eleven at night a council of war was held by the generals on horseback, as to the course which the army should pursue. It was strongly represented by Osterman Tolstoy, the second in command, and Generals Knoring and Lestocq, that at last Buonaparte had been defeated in a pitched battle, and that it would be to the last degree impolitic to destroy the moral effect of such an advantage by retreating before him, and thus giving him a fair pretext for representing it as a victory; that they were ready instantly or next day to follow up their success, and attack the enemy wherever they could find him, and that at all events, they would pledge their heads that, if the general-in-chief would only stand firm, Napoleon would be driven to a disastrous retreat. Strong as these considerations

were, they were overbalanced, in Benningsen's estimation, by still stronger. He knew that his own loss was not less than twenty thousand men, and though he had every reason to believe that the enemy's was still heavier, yet the means of repairing the chasm existed to a greater degree in the hands of Napoleon than his own; Ney, whose corps had suffered comparatively little, had just joined him; Bernadotte, it was to be presumed, would instantly be summoned to headquarters; and these fresh troops might give the enemy the means of cutting him off from Königsberg, in which case, in the total destitution for provisions which prevailed, the most dreadful calamities might be apprehended. Influenced by these considerations, Benningsen, who was ignorant of the enormous magnitude of the losses which the French had sustained, and who, though a gallant veteran, had lost somewhat of the vigour of youth, and had been thirty-six hours on horseback with hardly any nourishment, persevered in his opinion. He accordingly directed the order of march, which began at midnight, through Schloditten towards Königsberg, without any molestation from the enemy. They took post at Wottemberg, three leagues in front of that town, where the wearied soldiers, after a struggle of unexampled severity, were at length enabled to taste a few hours of repose.¹

¹ Wilson, 108, 109.
Jom. ii. 365, 366. Dum. xviii. 37, 39.

Such was the terrible battle of Eylau, fought in the depth of winter, amidst ice and snow, under circumstances of unexampled horror; the most bloody and obstinately contested that had yet occurred during the war; and in which, if Napoleon did not sustain a positive defeat, he underwent a disaster which had wellnigh proved his ruin. The loss on both sides was immense, and never in modern times had a field of battle been strewn with such a multitude of slain. On the side of the Russians twenty-five thousand had fallen, of whom above seven thousand were already no more: on that of the French upwards of thirty thousand were killed or wounded, and nearly ten thousand had left their colours, under pretence of attending to the wounded, and did not make their appearance for several days afterwards. The other trophies of victory

74.
Results of the battle, and losses on both sides.

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¹ Jom. ii. 365.
Dum. xviii.
39, 40.
Wilson, 108,
109, 111.

were nearly equally balanced: the Russians had to boast of the unusual spectacle of twelve eagles taken from their antagonists; while the French had made spoil of sixteen of the Russian guns, and fourteen standards. Hardly any prisoners were made on either side during the action; but six thousand of the wounded, most of them in a hopeless state, were left on the field of battle, and fell into the hands of the French.¹*

75.
Aspect of the
field of battle
on the follow-
ing day.

Never was spectacle so dreadful as that field presented on the following morning. Above fifty thousand men lay in the space of two leagues, weltering in blood. The wounds were, for the most part, of the severest kind, from the extraordinary quantity of cannon-balls which had been discharged during the action, and the close proximity of the contending masses to the deadly batteries, which spread grape at half-musket shot through their ranks. Though stretched on the cold snow, and exposed to the severity of an Arctic winter, the sufferers were burning with thirst, and piteous cries were heard on all sides for water, or assistance to extricate the wounded men from beneath the heaps of slain, or load of horses by which they were crushed. Six thousand of these noble animals encumbered the field, or, maddened with pain, were shrieking aloud amidst the stifled groans of the wounded. Subdued by loss of blood, tamed by cold, exhausted by hunger, the foemen lay side by side amidst the general wreck. The Cossack was to be seen beside the Italian; the gay vine-dresser from the banks of the Garonne lay athwart the stern peasant from the

² 58th Bulletin.
³ Month.
Melanges, 286.

* The official accounts of this great battle on both sides are so much interwoven with falsehood as to furnish no clue whatever to the truth. That of Napoleon is distinguished by more than his usual misrepresentation. He states his loss at 1900 killed, and 5700 wounded, in all 7600.² Judging by his usual practice, which was to avow a loss about a fourth of its real amount, this would imply a loss of 30,000 men. At St Helena he admitted that he lost 18,000;³ and considering that the Russians admit a loss of above 20,000, that their artillery throughout the day was greatly superior to that of the French, and that they sustained no loss in any quarter comparable to that of Augereau's corps, which was so completely destroyed that its remains were immediately incorporated with the other corps, and the corps itself disappeared entirely from the Grand Army, it may safely be concluded that this estimate is not exaggerated. "Our loss," says the Duchess of Abrantes, "at Eylau was enormous—Why conceal the truth? The Emperor avowing the truth at Eylau would have appeared to me more truly great than putting forth an official falsehood which no child could believe, more especially if he was nephew or son of Col. Semelé of the 24th regiment of the line, one of the finest in the army, and itself equal almost to a brigade, which was to a man destroyed."—D'ABRANTES, ix. 367.

plains of the Ukraine. The extremity of suffering had extinguished alike the fiercest and the most generous passions. After his usual custom Napoleon, in the afternoon, rode through this dreadful field, accompanied by his generals and staff, while the still burning piles of Serpallen and Saussgarten sent volumes of black smoke over the scene of death: but the men exhibited none of their wonted enthusiasm; no cries of *Vive l'Empereur!* were heard; the bloody surface echoed only with the cries of suffering, or the groans of wo. It is this moment which the genius of Le Gros has selected for the finest and most inspired painting that exists of the Emperor, in that immortal work which, amidst the false taste and artificial sentiment of Parisian society, has revived the severe simplicity and chastened feeling of ancient art.¹ *

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¹ Dum. xviii.
40, 41.
Wilson, 109.
Ann. Reg.
1807, 14, 15.

For nine days after the battle, the French remained at Eylau, unable to advance, unwilling to retreat, and apparently awaiting some pacific overture from the enemy. The only movement of any consequence which was attempted was by Murat, with twelve regiments of cuirassiers, who approached the Russian position in front of Königsberg; but he was defeated by the Allied horse, with the loss of four hundred killed and three hundred prisoners. Elated with this success, the Cossacks became daily more enterprising in their incursions. Night and day they gave the enemy no rest in their position; the French foraging parties were cut off; and to such a length was this partisan warfare carried, and so completely did the superiority of the Cossacks in its conduct appear, that during the ten days the Emperor remained at Eylau, upwards of fifteen hundred of his cavalry were made prisoners, and brought into Königsberg. Meanwhile the relative situation of the two armies was rapidly changing: the Russians, with the great seaport of Königsberg in their rear, were amply supplied with every thing, and their wounded carefully nursed in the great hospitals of that city;² while the French, still starving

76.
Inactivity
and losses of
the French
after the
battle.

Feb. 14.

² Wils. 109,
111. Dum.
xviii. 49, 51.

* This admirable painting, the masterpiece of modern French art, is to be seen in the Luxembourg at Paris, standing forth in dark simplicity amidst its meretricious compeers: it is worthy to be placed beside the finest battle-pieces of Le Brun or Tempesta, and in grandeur of thought and effect, far excels any British work of art since the days of Reynolds.

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77.

Napoleon
calls in all
his reinforce-
ments, and
proposes
peace.

Feb. 15.

Feb. 17.

¹ Hard. ix.

395, 399.

Lucches.

Bign. vi. 154,
155.

on the snows of Eylau, and unable, from the superiority of the Russian horse, to levy requisitions in the surrounding country, were daily reduced to greater straits from want of provisions, and totally destitute of all the accommodations requisite to withstand the rigour of the season.

Meanwhile Napoleon, however, was not idle. The day after the battle he issued orders for all the troops in his rear to advance by forced marches to the scene of action. The cuirassiers of Nansouty, which had not been engaged, arrived in consequence two days after. Lefebvre received orders to suspend the blockade of Dantzic, and concentrate his corps at Osterode, in order to form a reserve to the army, and co-operate with Savary, who had the command of Lannes' corps on the Narew. All the bridges on the Lower Vistula were put in a posture of defence, and Bernadotte was brought up to Eylau. Such, however, had been the havoc in the army, that the Emperor, notwithstanding these great reinforcements, did not venture to renew hostilities, or advance against Königsberg, the prize of victory, where he would have found the best possible winter quarters, and the steeples of which were visible from the heights occupied by his army.* Even the critical position of the Russian army, with its back to the sea and the river Pregel, where defeat would necessarily prove ruin, could not induce Napoleon to hazard another encounter; and finding that the Russians were not disposed to propose an armistice, he determined himself to take that step. For this purpose, General Bertram was sent to Benningsen's outposts with proposals of peace both to the Emperor of Russia and the King of Prussia. The Russian general sent him on to Memel, where the latter was, with a letter strongly advising him not to treat, and representing that the fact of Napoleon proposing an armistice after so doubtful a battle, was the best evidence that it was not for the interest of the Allies to grant it. The terms proposed were very different from those offered after the triumph of Jena:¹ there were no more declarations that

* When Napoleon began the battle of Eylau, he never doubted he would be in Königsberg next day. In his proclamation to his soldiers, before the action commenced, he said, "In two days the enemy will cease to exist, and your fatigues will be compensated by a luxurious and honourable repose." And on the same day Berthier wrote to Josephine—"The Russians have fled to Gumbinnen on the road to Russia, to-morrow Königsberg will receive the Emperor."—WILSON, 113.

the House of Brandenburg must resign half its dominions, or that he would make the Prussian nobles so poor that they should be reduced to beg their bread.*

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Frederick William, however, was not led to swerve from the path of honour even by this tempting offer. Widely as the language of the French Emperor differed from that which he had formerly employed, and clearly as his present moderation evinced the extent of the losses he had sustained at Eylau, still the existing situation and recent engagements of the Prussian monarch, precluded his entering, consistently with national faith, into a separate negotiation. The Emperor of Russia had just given the clearest indication of the heroic firmness with which he was disposed to maintain the contest, by the vigorous campaign which he had commenced in the depth of winter, and the resolution with which he had sustained a sanguinary battle of unexampled severity. The conduct of England, it is true, had been very different from what it had hitherto been during the Revolutionary war, and hardly any assistance had been received either from its arms or its treasures by the Allies, engaged in a contest of life and death on the shores of the Vistula. But this disgraceful and parsimonious disposition had recently relented, and some trifling succours had just been obtained from the British government, which, although unworthy for England to offer, were yet gratefully received, as indicating a disposition on the part of its cabinet to take a more active part in the future stages of the struggle.† Under the influence of

78.
Which is
refused by
Prussia.

* Napoleon's letter to the King of Prussia was in these terms—"I desire to put a period to the misfortunes of your family, and organise as speedily as possible the Prussian monarchy, whose intermediate power is necessary for the tranquillity of Europe. I desire peace with Russia—and, provided the cabinet of St Petersburg has no designs on the Turkish Empire, I see no difficulty in obtaining it. Peace with England is not less essential to all nations; and I shall have no hesitation in sending a minister to Memel to take part in a Congress of France, Sweden, England, Russia, Prussia, and Turkey. But as such a Congress may last many years, which would not suit the present condition of Prussia, your Majesty therefore will, I am persuaded, be of opinion that I have taken the simplest method, and the one which is most likely to secure the prosperity of your subjects. At all events, I entreat your Majesty to believe in my sincere desire to re-establish amicable relations with so friendly a power as Prussia, and that I wish to do the same with Russia and England."—HARD. ix. 396; SCHOELL, viii. 37-405.

† They consisted only of £80,000 in money. A further subsidy of £100,000 and £200,000 worth of arms and ammunition, with the promise of future succours, was furnished by the British government in May following, in return for a solemn renunciation, on the part of the cabinet of Berlin, of all claim to the Electorate of Hanover.—HARD., ix. 397; *Ann Reg.* 1807, 23; *Parl. Deb.* ix. 987.

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¹ Bign. vi.
158. Parl.
Deb. ix. 987.
Hard. ix. 398.
Lucches. i.
290, 291.

these feelings and expectations, the Prussian government, notwithstanding the almost desperate situation of their affairs, and the occupation of nine-tenths of their territories by the enemy's forces, refused to engage in any separate negotiation,—an instance of magnanimous firmness in the extremity of danger which is worthy of the highest admiration, and which went far to wipe away the stain that their former vacillating conduct towards Napoleon had affixed to the Prussian annals.¹

79.
Napoleon re-
treats and
goes into can-
tonments on
the Passarge.

Foiled in his endeavours to seduce Prussia into a separate accommodation, Napoleon was driven to the painful alternative of a retreat. Orders were given on the 17th for all the corps to fall back, the advanced posts being strengthened, in order to prevent the enemy from becoming aware of what was going forward, or commencing a pursuit. Eylau was evacuated, six hundred wounded abandoned to the humanity of the enemy, and the army, retiring by the great road through Landsberg, spread itself into cantonments on the banks of the Passarge, from Hohenstein, where it takes its rise, to Braunsberg, where it falls into the Baltic Sea. Headquarters were established at Osterode, in the centre of the line; the bulk of the army being quartered between that place and Wormditt. Lefebvre received orders to return to Thorn, unite with the Polish and Saxon contingents, and resume the siege of Dantzic, the preparations for which had been entirely suspended since the general consternation which followed the battle of Eylau.²

² Wilson,
115, 116.
Dum. xviii
56, 64.

80.
The Russians
advance, and
also go into
cantonments.
Both parties
claim the
victory at
Eylau.

Benningesen hastened to occupy the country which the enemy had evacuated, and on the 25th February his headquarters were advanced to Landsberg. As the Russian army passed over the bloody fields of Preussich-Eylau and Hoff, still encumbered with dead, and strewn with the remains of the desperate contest of which they had recently been the theatre, they felt that they had some reason to claim the advantage in those well-fought fields; and Benningesen issued a proclamation to his troops, in which he now openly claimed the victory.* Napoleon also addressed his soldiers; but

* Benningesen said—"Soldiers! As the enemy was manœuvring to cut us off from our frontiers, I made my army change its position, in order to defeat his

though it was with his usual confidence, yet it was impossible to conceal from the men, or from Europe, that the Grand Army had now for the first time retreated, and that the remains of their comrades on the field of battle had to trust to the humanity of an enemy for their sepulture.* In truth, however, not only the battle, but the objects of the winter campaign, had been equally divided. It was not to draw the French army from the Vistula to the Passarge, a distance of above a hundred miles, that Benningsen had concentrated his troops and resumed offensive operations in the depth of winter; and it was not to retire from within sight of the steeples of Königsberg to the wretched villages on the latter stream, that Napoleon had fought so desperate a battle at Eylau. The one struck for Dantzic, the other for Königsberg, and both were foiled in their respective objects: fifty thousand men had perished without giving a decisive advantage to either of the combatants.¹

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¹ Dum. xviii.
64, 67. Wilson, 116.

To this period of the Polish war belong the operations of Essen and Savary on the Narew and the neighbourhood of Ostrolenka. Savary had occupied that town with a large part of Lannes' corps, who, as already mentioned, was sick; and Essen having received considerable accessions of force from the army of Moldavia, which raised his disposable numbers to twenty thousand men, received orders, early in February, to attack the French in that

81.
Operations of
Essen against
Savary.
Combat of
Ostrolenka.

projects. The French, deceived by that movement, have fallen into the snare laid for them. The roads by which they followed us are strewed with their dead. They have been led on to the field of Eylau, where your incomparable valour has shown of what the Russian heroism is capable. In that battle more than thirty thousand French have found their graves. They have been forced to retire at all points, and to abandon to us their wounded, their standards, and their baggage. Warriors! you have now reposed from your fatigues; forward! let us pursue the enemy, put the finishing stroke to our glorious deeds, and after having, by fresh victories, given peace to the world, we will re-enter our beloved country."—DUMAS, xviii. 67.

* Napoleon's address was as follows:—"Soldiers! we were beginning to taste the sweets of repose in our winter quarters, when the enemy attacked the first corps on the Lower Vistula; we flew to meet him; pursued him, sword in hand, for eighty leagues; he was driven for shelter beneath the cannons of his fortresses, and beyond the Pregel. In the combats of Bergfried, Dippen, Hoff, and the battle of Eylau, we have taken sixty pieces of cannon, sixteen standards; killed, wounded, or taken more than 40,000 Russians; the brave who have fallen on our side have fallen nobly, like true soldiers. Their families shall receive our protection. Having thus defeated the whole projects of the enemy, we will draw near to the Vistula, and re-enter our winter quarters; whoever ventures to disturb our repose, shall repent of it—for beyond the Vistula, as beyond the Danube, in the depth of winter as in the heat of summer, we shall always be the soldiers of the Grand Army."—DUMAS, xviii. 63.

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quarter. The object was to engage their attention, in order to prevent any reinforcements being drawn from that corps to the main army, then advancing to the decisive battle of Eylau. Essen advanced with his corps on each side of the river Narew. That commanded by the Russian general in person on the right bank, encountered Savary, who was supported by Suchet with his brilliant division; a rude conflict ensued, in which the Russians were finally worsted. Greater success, however, attended their efforts on the left bank: supported by the fire of fifty pieces of artillery, they drove back the French to the walls of Ostrolenka, and entering pell-mell with the fugitives, penetrated into the principal square, and were on the point of obtaining decisive success. At this critical moment, Oudinot, who was marching with six thousand of the Guard to join the Grand Army from Warsaw, arrived with his division of fresh troops, and uniting with Suchet, who halted in the midst of his pursuit on the right bank to fly to the scene of danger, succeeded, after a bloody encounter in the streets, in driving them into the sand-hills behind the town, where a destructive cannonade was kept up till nightfall. In this affair the Russians lost seven guns and fifteen hundred men, and the French as many; but having succeeded in their object in defending the town, and keeping the communication of the Grand Army open with Warsaw, they with reason claimed the victory.¹

¹ Sav. iii.
36, 39. Wil-
son, 119.
Jom. ii. 367,
368. Dum.
xviii. 69, 75.

82.
Immense
sensation ex-
cited by the
battle of
Eylau in
Europe.

The battle of Eylau excited a prodigious sensation in Europe, and brought Napoleon to the very verge of destruction. Had a ministry of more capacity in military combination been then at the head of affairs in England, there cannot be the smallest doubt that the triumphs of 1813 might have been anticipated by seven years, and the calamities of Europe at once arrested. The first accounts of the battle received through the French bulletins rendered it evident that some disaster had been incurred, and the anxious expectation every where excited by this unsatisfactory communication was increased by the long interval which ensued before the Russian accounts arrived. At length, when, from Benningesen's report, it appeared that he claimed the victory,

and, from the stationary condition of the Russian army in front of Königsberg, and the ultimate retreat of the French to the banks of the Passarge, that these pretensions were not devoid of foundation, the public transport rose to the highest pitch. It was confidently expected that, now that Napoleon had for once been decisively foiled, the Austrians would instantly declare themselves, and their forty thousand men in observation in Bohemia, be converted into a hundred thousand in activity on the Elbe.* To stimulate and support such a combination, the public voice in England loudly demanded the immediate despatch of a powerful British force to the mouth of the Elbe: and, recollecting the universal exasperation which prevailed in the north of Germany at the French in consequence of the enormous requisitions which they had every where levied from the inhabitants, whether warlike or neutral, there cannot be a doubt that the appearance of fifty thousand English soldiers would have been attended with decisive effects both upon the conduct of Austria and the future issue of the war. Nothing, however, was done; the English ministry, under the direction of Lord Howick, notwithstanding the most urgent entreaties from Russia and Prussia, sent no succours in men or money. The decisive period was allowed to pass by without any thing being attempted in support of the common cause, and the British nation in consequence had the Peninsular war to go through to regain the vantage ground which was then within their grasp.†

It is the most signal proof of the obstinacy with which

* "I trembled," says Jomini, speaking in the person of Napoleon, "lest 150,000 of those mediators had appeared on the Elbe, which would have plunged me into the greatest difficulties. I there saw that I had placed myself at the mercy of my enemies. More than once I then regretted having suffered myself to be drawn on into those remote and inhospitable countries, and received with so much asperity all who sought to portray its danger. The cabinet of Vienna had then a safer and more honourable opportunity of re-establishing its preponderance than that which it chose in 1813, but it had not resolution enough to profit by it, and my firm countenance proved my salvation."—JOMINI, ii. 369.

† "Repeated and urgent applications were made in February and March 1807 for an English army, consisting of cavalry, infantry, and artillery, to co-operate with the Swedish forces in Pomerania, but in vain.—Some subsidies were granted in April, but no troops sailed from England till July, when they consisted only of 8000 men, who were sent to the Island of Rugen." *Ann. Reg.* 1807, p. 23; LUCCHESINI, ii. 290, 296.

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1807.

83.

Unwise
refusal of
military suc-
cour by Eng-
land.

the British government, under the direction of Lord Howick, since Earl Grey, adhered to their ill-timed system of withdrawing altogether from continental affairs, that they clung to it even after the account of the battle of Eylau had arrived in London, and it was universally seen over Europe that a crisis in Napoleon's fate was at hand. In the end of February 1807, earnest applications were made by the cabinets of St Petersburg and Berlin for the aid of a British auxiliary force to menace the coasts of France and Holland, and land on the coast of Pomerania. The advantage was pointed out of "despatching, without a moment's delay, on board the swiftest ships of Great Britain, a strong British auxiliary land force to co-operate with the army of Gustavus Adolphus, and thereby compel the French to retreat. They were engaged in the siege of Stralsund, and in laying waste that province; and if the British force did not arrive in sufficient time to dislodge them, they might steer for some harbour in the Baltic, from whence their junction with the Allied armies could certainly be effected." Lord Howick replied on the 10th March—"The approach of spring is doubtless the most favourable period for military operations; but in the present juncture the Allies *must not look for any considerable aid from the land force of Great Britain.*"¹

¹ Lucches. ii.
295, 296.
Desp. be-
tween Eng-
land and
Russia in
1806 and
1807, p. 130.

84.

Universal
consternation
at Paris on
the news
being
received of
Eylau.

In proportion to the sanguine hopes which this bloody contest excited in Germany and England, was the gloom and depression which it diffused through all ranks in France. The Parisians were engaged in a vortex of unusual gaiety; balls, theatres, and parties succeeded one another in endless succession, when the news of the battle of Eylau fell at once on their festivity like a thunderbolt. They had learned to distrust the bulletins; they saw clearly that Augereau's divergence had been occasioned by something more than the snow-storm. The funds rapidly fell, and private letters soon circulated and were eagerly sought after, which gave a true and even exaggerated account of the calamity. Hardly a family in Paris but had to lament the loss of some near relation or intimate friend: the multitude of mourners cast a gloom over the streets; the general consternation suspended all the

amusements of the capital. The most exaggerated reports were spread, and found a ready reception by the excited population. One day it was generally credited that Napoleon had fallen back behind the Vistula; the next that a dreadful engagement had taken place, in which he himself, with half his army, had fallen. So far did the universal consternation proceed, that the members of the government began to look out for their own interests in the approaching shipwreck; and even the imperial family itself was divided into factions, Josephine openly supporting the pretensions of her son, Eugene, to succeed to the throne, and the Princess Caroline employing all the influence of her charms to secure Junot, governor of Paris, whom she held in silken chains, in the interest of her husband Murat.¹

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¹ Sav. iii. 42,
43. D'Abr.
ix. 356, 364.

The general gloom was sensibly increased when the message of Napoleon, dated March 26, to the conservative senate, announced that a fresh conscription was to be raised of eighty thousand men, in March 1807, for September 1808. This was the *third* levy which had been called for since the Prussian war began; the first when the contest commenced, the second during the triumph and exultation which followed the victory of Jena, the third amidst the gloom and despondency which succeeded the carnage of Eylau. No words can do justice to the consternation which this third requisition excited amongst all classes, especially those whose children were likely to be reached by the destructive scourge. In vain the bulletins announced that victories were gained with hardly any loss. The terrific demand of three different conscriptions, amounting to no less than two hundred and forty thousand men in seven months, too clearly demonstrated the fearful chasms which sickness and the sword of the enemy had made in their ranks. The number of young men who annually attained the age of eighteen in France, which was the period selected for the conscription, was about two hundred thousand. Thus, in half a year, more than a whole annual generation had been required for a service which experience had now proved to be almost certain destruction. So great was the general apprehension, that the government did not venture to promulgate the order until, by emissaries and

85.
Napoleon de-
mands a third
conscription
since the 14th
October.

CHAP.
XLIV.

1807.

¹ Ann. Reg.
1806, 167,
169. Bign. vi.
239.

86.
Immense
activity of
Napoleon to
repair his
losses.

articles in the public journals, the public mind had been in some degree prepared for the shock. When it was announced, Regnaud St Angely, the orator intrusted with the task, shed tears, and even the obsequious senate could not express their acquiescence by any of the acclamations with which they usually received the imperial mandates. So powerful was the public feeling, so visible and universal the expression of terror in the capital, that it was found necessary to assuage the general grief by a clause, declaring that the new levy was at first to be merely organised as an army of reserve for the defence of the frontier, under veteran generals, members of the conservative senate. These promises, however, proved entirely elusory. The victory of Friedland saved the new conscripts from the slaughter of the Russian bayonets, only to reserve them for the Caudine forks, or the murder of the guerillas in the fields of Spain.¹

Meanwhile, the prodigious activity of the Emperor was employed, during the cessation of hostilities in Poland, in the most active measures to repair his losses, organise the new levies, wring the sinews of war out of the conquered provinces, and hasten forward the conscripts as fast as they joined their depots on all the roads leading to the theatre of war. All the highways converging from France and Italy to the Vistula were covered with troops, artillery, ammunition, and stores of all sorts, for the use of the army. Extensive purchases of horses in Holstein, Flanders, and Saxony, provided for the remounting of the cavalry and the artillery-drivers; while enormous requisitions every where in Germany,* furnished the means of subsistence to the unwieldy multitude who were now assembled on the shores of the Vistula. Nay, so far did the provident care of the

* The requisitions from the city of Hamburg and the Hanse Towns will give an idea of the almost incredible extent to which these exactions were carried by Napoleon at this time; and of the blind violence with which he pursued the English commerce at the very time that it had become, from his own acts, indispensable for the equipment of his troops. By an imperial decree, in March 1807, Hamburg was ordered to furnish—

200,000 pairs of shoes;
50,000 great-coats;
16,000 coats;
37,000 waistcoats.

M. Bourrienne, the resident at Hamburg, who was charged with the execution of this order, had no alternative but to contract with *English houses* for these enormous supplies, which all the industry of the north of Germany could

Emperor go, and so strongly did he feel the imminent danger of his present situation, that, while his proclamations breathed only the language of confidence, and spoke of carrying the French standards across the Niemen, he was in fact making the most extensive preparations for a defensive warfare, and anticipating a struggle for life or death on the banks of the Rhine. All the fortresses on that river, and on the Flemish frontier, were armed, and put in a posture of defence. The new levy was directed to be placed in five camps, to cover the most unprotected points of the territory of the empire; while the whole veterans in the interior were called out and organised into battalions with the coast-guard, to protect the coasts of Flanders and the Channel, and overawe the discontented in Brittany and La Vendée. "It is necessary," said he, "that, at the sight of the triple barrier of camps which surround our territory, as at the aspect of the triple line of fortresses which cover our frontier, the enemy should be undeceived in their extravagant expectations, and see the necessity of returning, from the impossibility of success, to sentiments of moderation."¹

¹ Bign. vi.
238, 239.
Ann. Reg.
1807, 3.

Neither Napoleon nor his enemies were mistaken in the estimate which they formed of the perilous nature of the crisis which succeeded the battle of Eylau. Nothing can be more certain than that a second dubious encounter on the Vistula would have been immediately followed by a disastrous retreat beyond the Rhine. Metternich afterwards said to the ministers of the French Emperor, "We can afford to lose many battles, but a single defeat will destroy your master;" and such, in truth, was the situation of France during the whole reign of Napoleon. It is the precarious tenure by which power is held by all those who rest for their support upon the *prestige* of opinion or the fervour of passion, whether democratic or military, which is the secret cause of their ultimate fall. Constant success,

87.
Extreme
danger of
Napoleon's
situation at
this juncture.

not furnish within the prescribed time; and as the same necessity was felt universally, the result was, that when the Grand Army took the field in June, it was almost all equipped in the cloth of Leeds and Halifax, and that too at a time when the penalty of death was affixed to the importation of English manufactures of any sort! A full enumeration of all the contributions levied on Germany during the war of 1807 will be given in a succeeding chapter, drawn from official sources: the magnitude of them almost exceeds belief.—See BOURRIENNE, vii. 293, 294.

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fresh victories, an unbroken series of triumphs, are indispensable to the existence of such an authority. It has no middle ground to retire to, no durable interests to rouse for its support; it has perilled all upon a single throw; the alternative is always universal empire or total ruin. This was not the case in a greater degree with Napoleon than any other conqueror in similar circumstances. It obtained equally with Cæsar, Alexander, and Tammerlane; it is to be seen in the British empire in India; it is the invariable attendant of power in all ages, founded on the triumphs of passion over the durable and persevering exertions of reason and interest.* It is a constant sense of this truth which is the true key to the character of Napoleon, which explains alike what the world erroneously called his insatiable ambition and his obstinate retention of the vantage ground which he had gained; which was at once the secret reason of his advance to the Kremlin, and of his otherwise inexplicable stay at Moscow and Dresden. He knew that, throughout his whole career, he could not retain except by constantly advancing, and that the first step in retreat was the commencement of ruin.

88.
Ruinous
effect of the
surrender of
the Prussian
fortresses.

The Polish winter campaign demonstrates, in the most striking manner, the ruinous effects to the common cause, and in an especial manner to the interests of their own monarchy, which resulted from the disgraceful capitulations of the Prussian fortresses in the preceding autumn. When the balance quivered at Eylau, the arrival of Lestocq would have given the Russians a decisive victory, had it not been for the great successes of Davoust on the left and the tardy appearance of Ney on the right. Whereas, if the governors of the Prussian fortresses on the Elbe and the Oder had done their duty, these two corps would have been engaged far in the rear—Ney around the walls of Magdeburg, Davoust before Stettin, Custrin, and Glogau. Saragossa, with no defence but an old wall and the heroism of its inhabitants, held out after fifty days of open trenches against two French corps; Tarragona fell after as

* When Lord Ellenborough gave his consent to the second advance of the British to Cabul, under Generals Nott and Pollock, he said in his despatches to these generals, "Recollect, a second disaster like that of the Coord-Cabul Pass will lose us our Indian Empire."

many. If the French marshals had, in like manner, been detained two months, or even six weeks, before each of the great fortresses of Prussia, time would have been gained to organise the resources of the eastern provinces of the monarchy, and Russia would have gained a decisive victory at Eylau, or driven Napoleon to a disastrous retreat from the Vistula—a striking proof of the danger of military men mingling political with warlike considerations, or adopting any other line, when charged with the interests of their country, than the simple course of military duty.

Benningesen's assembling of his army in silence behind the dark screen of the Johannisberg forest; the hardihood and resolution of his winter march across Poland, and his bold stroke at the left wing of the French army when reposing in its cantonments, were entitled to the very highest praise, and if executed with more vigour at the moment of attack, would have led to the most important results. His subsequent retreat in presence of the Grand Army, without any serious loss, and the desperate stand he made at Eylau, as well as the skill with which the attacks of Napoleon were baffled on that memorable field, deservedly place him in a very high rank among the commanders of that age of glory. Napoleon's advance to Pultusk and Golymin, and subsequently his march from Warsaw towards Königsberg, in the depth of winter, were distinguished by all his usual skill in combination and vigour in execution; but the results were very different from what had attended the turning of the Austrian and Prussian armies at Ulm and Jena. Columns were here cut off, communications threatened, corps planted in the rear, but no tremendous disasters such as had previously been experienced were sustained; the Russians fronted quickly and fought desperately on every side, and from the hazardous game the assailant suffered nearly as much as the retiring party. A striking proof of what so many other events during the war conspired to demonstrate, that a certain degree of native resolution will often succeed in foiling the greatest military genius, and that it was as much to the want of that essential quality in his opponents, as to his own talents, that the previous triumphs of Napoleon had been owing.

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89.

Observations
on the move-
ments of both
parties.

CHAPTER XLV.

DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN MEASURES OF MR FOX'S
ADMINISTRATION.—FEB. 1806—MARCH 1807.

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1.

Important
civil changes
which origi-
nated during
the war.

IF history were composed merely of the narrative of wars and campaigns, it would, how interesting soever to the lovers of adventure, or important to those intrusted with the national defence, be justly subject to the reproach of being occupied only with the passions and calamities of mankind. But even in the periods when military exploit appears to be most conspicuous, and battles and sieges seem to occupy exclusively the attention of the historian, great and important civil changes are going forward; and the activity of the human mind, aroused by the perils which prevail, and the forcible collision of interests and passions which is induced, is driven into new channels, and turned to the investigation of fresh objects of thought. It is the tendency of those periods of tranquillity, when no serious concerns, whether of nations or individuals, are at stake, to induce a state of torpor and inactivity in the national dispositions. Mankind repose after their struggles and their dangers; the arts of peace, social interests, the abstract sciences, are cultivated; the violent passions, the warm enthusiasm, the enduring fortitude of former days, pass into the page of history, and excite the astonishment or provoke the ridicule of their pacific successors. Such a period is, of all others, the most conducive to general happiness; but it is far from being that in which the greatest and most original efforts of human thought are made. Selfishness, like a gangrene, then comes to over-

spread the state, and generosity of feeling, equally with elevation of thought, are lost in the pursuit of private interest. The age of the Antonines in ancient, the era of the Georges in modern times, were unquestionably those when the greatest sum of general happiness prevailed in the Roman and British empires; but we shall look in vain in the authors or statesmen of either for the original thought, vigorous expression, or disinterested feeling, which characterised the stormy periods of Cæsar and Pompey, of Cromwell and Napoleon.

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The accession of the Whig ministry to the direction of affairs, was an event eminently calculated to afford full scope for the practical application to the measures of the legislature, of those ideas of social improvement which the agitation and excitement of the preceding fifteen years had caused to take deep root among a large proportion of the thinking part of the people. The men who had now succeeded to the helm, embraced a considerable part of the aristocracy, much of the talent, and still more of the philanthropy of the state. For a long course of years they had been excluded from power; and during that time they had been led, both by principle and interest, to turn their attention to those projects of social amelioration which the French Revolution had rendered generally prevalent among the democratic classes, and which were in an eminent degree calculated to win the affections of the popular party throughout the kingdom. The period, therefore, when their leaders, by their installation in power, obtained the means of carrying their projected changes into effect, is of importance, not merely as evincing the character and objects of a party justly celebrated in English history both for their talents and achievements, but as illustrating the modification which revolutionary principles receive when adopted by the highest class of persons, long trained to the habits and speculations of a free country.

2.
Effects of the
accession of
the Whigs to
power.

The composition of the army was the first matter which underwent a thorough discussion, and was subjected to a different system, in consequence of the accession of the new administration. Notwithstanding the uniform opposition which the Whigs had offered to the war, and the censures which they had in general bestowed upon all

3.
Their plan for
a new system
for the re-
cruiting of the
army.

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Mr Pitt's measures for increasing the naval and military establishments of the country, it had now become painfully evident, even to themselves, that the nation was involved in a contest, which might be of very long duration, with a gigantic foe, and that the whole resources of the country might be speedily required to combat for the national existence with the veteran legions of Napoleon on the shores of Britain. The means of recruiting which can ever exist in a free country are altogether unequal to those which are at the command of a despotic one, whether monarchical or democratic, unless in those rare periods of public excitement when the intensity of patriotic feeling supplies the want of powers of compulsion on the part of the executive. Accordingly, throughout the whole war, great difficulty had been experienced by the British government in providing a proper supply of soldiers for the regular army. The only method pursued was voluntary enlistment—the jealousy of a free constitution not permitting a conscription, except for the militia, which could not legally be sent out of the kingdom—and the success of the attempt to extend this system to the raising of troops of the line by balloting for fifty thousand men to compose the army of reserve, in 1803, had not been such as to hold out any inducement for a repetition of the attempt. It had not produced thirty-five thousand effective soldiers. Enlistment for life was the system universally pursued—it being thought that in a country where the pay of the soldier was necessarily, from the expense of the establishment, less than the wages of ordinary workmen, to allow a power of retiring after a stated period of service was over, might endanger the state, by thinning the ranks of the army at the most critical periods. To this point the attention of former administrations had frequently been directed, and a recent change had been made by Mr Pitt, which had considerably increased the annual supply of recruits by enlistment; but the new ministry introduced at once a total change of system, by the introduction of enlistments for a limited period of service.

It was argued in parliament by the supporters of this change, and especially by Mr Windham—"The fate of nations at all times when contending with one another

has been determined chiefly by the composition of their armies. The times are past, if they ever existed, when one country contended against another by the general strength of its population, when the strength of the army was the mere amount of the physical force and courage of the individuals who composed it. Armies are now the champions on either side to which the countries engaged commit their quarrel, and when the champion falls the cause is lost. The notion of a levy *en masse* or voluntary force, therefore, would seem to be one to which it would be wholly unsafe to trust. In how many instances has it ever happened that when the army was defeated the contest has been restored by the efforts of the people at large? The people in mass are like metal in the ore; and as all the iron that ever came from a Swedish mine would never hew a block or divide a plank till it was wrought and fashioned into the shape of a hatchet or a saw, so the strength of a people can never, perhaps, be made capable of producing much effect in war till it is extracted partially, and moulded into that factitious and highly polished instrument called an army. What are the two events which more than any other two have decided the present fate of the world? The battles of Marengo and Austerlitz. Yet what were the numbers there employed, the space occupied, or the lives lost, compared to the states and kingdoms whose fate was then decided? Yet such was the fact; millions hung upon thousands; the battles were lost, and Europe submitted to the conqueror. It was not because there did not exist in those countries, then irretrievably worsted, a brave and warlike people animated by the strongest feelings of devotion to their sovereign, and abhorring the idea of a foreign yoke. All these were there; twenty-five millions of men burning with patriotic ardour were around the Emperor; but the regular armies were defeated, and submission was a matter of necessity.

“Assuming, then, the importance of regular armies, which no one denies, but every one seems disposed to forget, the question is, how are they to be obtained? above all, how are we to ensure to this country, what unquestionably it has never had, a never-failing and adequate supply of regular soldiers? The nature of

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4.

Great change
in the com-
position of
the army.
Arguments
in support of
it by Mr
Windham.

5.

Impractica-
bility of
forced con-
scription.

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things here yields us but the option of two things, choice or force. In the continental monarchies recourse is usually had to the latter of these modes ; and undoubtedly, wherever the power of government is such that it has nothing to do but send its officers forth to seize the peasantry and force them to become soldiers, there can be no process so easy, effectual, and certain. But every one must be conscious that this is a mode of proceeding impracticable, except in extreme emergencies, in this country. Not that the power is wanting in government of ordering such a levy, but that the measures of force we can employ are so abhorrent to public feeling, so restricted and confined by legal forms, that their effect is almost reduced to nothing. Even if it could be enforced, the real character of such a compulsory service is only that of a tax, and of the worst of all taxes, a tax by lot. We hear every day that half measures will no longer suffice, that something effectual must be done ; but if from these generalities you descend to particulars, and propose to renew the act for the army of reserve, the feeling is immediately changed, and all declare they are decidedly against any measure of the sort. It is impossible to say to what the exigencies and necessities of the times may drive us : but unless a more urgent necessity is generally felt than exists at this moment, measures so oppressive in their immediate effects, so injurious in their ultimate results, should not be resorted to till it is proved by experience that all others have failed.

6.
Inefficiency
of voluntary
enlistment.

“ Voluntary enlistment, therefore, is the only resource which remains to us, and yet the experience of thirteen years’ warfare has now sufficiently demonstrated that from this source, in the present state and habits of our population, it is in vain to expect a sufficient supply of soldiers. If, however, you cannot change the habits or occupations of your people, what remains to be done but to increase the inducements to enter the army ? Without this, our means of recruiting must be little better than deception and artifice. We are in the state of men selling wares inferior in value to the price they ask for them ; and, accordingly, none

but the ignorant and thoughtless will ever be tempted to become buyers. To such a height has this arisen, that of late years our only resource has been recruiting boys ; men grown up, even with all the grossness, ignorance, and improvidence incident to the lower orders, are too wary to accept our offers ; we must add to the thoughtlessness arising from situation the weakness and improvidence of youth. The practice of giving bounties is decisive proof of this ; whatever is bestowed in that way shows that the service does not stand upon its true footing. Men require no temptation to engage in a profession which has sufficient inducements of its own. Never can the system of supplying the army be considered as resting upon its proper basis till the necessity of bounties shall have ceased, and the calling of a soldier shall be brought to the level with other trades and professions, for entering into which no man receives a premium, but where, on the contrary, a premium is frequently paid for permission to enter.

“ The great change by which this might, at first sight, appear likely to be effected, is by raising the pay. But independently of the financial embarrassments which any considerable alteration in that respect would produce, there is an invincible objection to such a change in the licentious habits, inconsistent with military discipline, which an undue command of money would generate among the soldiers. Provisions in sickness and old age ; pensions for the wounded ; honorary distinctions suited to the rank, situation, and condition of the party, are much safer recommendations ; but, above all, a change in the period of enlistment from life to a limited time, is the great alteration to which we must look for elevating the attractions of the army. This is the system of service in all the states of Europe except our own, and it is the condition of entering that large and efficient part of our own forces, now a hundred thousand strong, which is composed of the regular militia. That this system will have the effect of inducing men to enter, is so clear, so certain, so totally incontrovertible, that it is unnecessary to urge it. There is no man who would not prefer having an

Means by which he proposes to render it more efficient.

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option to having none. Our immense armies in India are all raised, and that too without the slightest difficulty, for limited service. A system of rewards for the regular and faithful soldier should also be established ; and that severity of discipline which is at present so much an object of terror to all persons of regular habits, should be materially softened. Not that it will, in all probability, ever be possible to dispense entirely with corporal punishment in the army ; for there are some turbulent spirits who can only be repressed by the fear of it. But the discipline may be rendered infinitely less rigorous. By this means a better description of men will be induced to enter the army ; and the better men you get the less necessity there will be for severe punishment. By these changes, also, the temptation to desertion will be greatly diminished ; the great and alarming frequency of which, of late years, has been mainly owing to high bounties and bad regulations ; and in legislating for this matter, it is material to invest courts-martial with a discretionary power to modify the penalty of desertion most materially, or take it away altogether, if it has been committed only in a moment of intoxication, or from the influence of bad example, or the soldier has made amends by returning to his colours.

8.
Advantages
of short
periods of
enlistment as
securing a
better class
of soldiers.

“It is a mistake to argue that the benefits I have proposed to introduce, being for the most part prospective, and to be reaped only at the end of seven or fourteen years, will not influence the inconsiderate description of men who form the great bulk of our common soldiers. That may be true as it relates to the description of men who, under the combined influence of bounties and intoxication on the one hand, and service for life and flogging on the other, almost exclusively enter our service. But the great benefit which may fairly be expected to result from a measure of the sort now proposed is, that it will introduce a new and better description of persons into the army, not altogether so thoughtless or inconsiderate, but who are attracted by the advantages which the military service holds out. Such considerations may frequently, indeed,

have little weight with the young man himself, but will they prove equally unavailing with his relations, arrived at a more advanced period of life, and familiar, from experience, with the difficulty of getting on in every profession? What attracts young men of family into the East India Company's service, notwithstanding all the disadvantages of a lifetime spent in exile, and a climate so deadly that not one in ten ever survives it? Not present advantages; for the pay, for the first ten years, barely equals the young man's expenses. It is ultimate benefits: the spectacle of nabobs frequently returning with fortunes; the certainty that all who survive will become entitled, after a specified period of service, to pensions, considerable with reference to the rank of life to which they belong. Such considerations may not be so decisive with the lower orders as the higher, but there is no rank to whom the sight of the actual enjoyment of the advantages of a particular profession will not speedily prove an attraction.

“To effect these objects, I propose that the term of military service should be divided into three periods, viz. for seven, fourteen, and twenty-one years for the infantry, but for ten, sixteen, and twenty-five for the artillery and cavalry, in consideration of the additional time requisite to render men efficient in those branches of service. At the end of each of those periods, the soldier is to have right to his discharge. If discharged at the close of the first, he is to have right to exercise his trade or calling in any town of the kingdom; at the end of the second, besides that advantage, to be entitled to a pension for life; at the end of the third, to the full allowance of Chelsea, which should be raised to 9d. and in some cases 1s. a-day. If wounded or disabled in the service, to receive the same pension as if he had served out his full time. Desertion to be punished, in the first instance, by the loss of so many years' service; in very aggravated cases only, by corporal infliction. Great exaggeration appears to have prevailed as to the benefits to be derived from the volunteer system. It is impossible, in the nature of things, that such a force can be brought to such a state of efficiency as to be able to cope with regular forces. Essential service may be

9.
Proposed
limitation of
that period.

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derived from such a force, but not in the line to which they have at present been directed. With a view to bring them back to their proper sphere, as they were originally constituted in 1798, it would be advisable to reduce their allowances and relax their discipline. Those corps only which are in a rank of life to equip themselves, and are willing to serve without pay, should be retained; the remainder of the population should be loosely trained, under regular officers, to act as irregular troops. It is not by vainly imitating the dress, air, and movements of regular troops, that a voluntary force can ever be brought to render effectual service. These are my fixed ideas; but as I find a volunteer force already existing, it would not be politic at once to reduce it. All I propose, in the mean time, is to reduce the period of drilling from eighty-five days to twenty-six, and make other reductions which will save the nation £857,000 a-year; all future volunteers to receive their pay only, and the trained bands to receive a shilling a-day for fourteen days a-year, but not to be dressed as soldiers, and not drilled or exercised as such. Rank should be taken from the volunteer officers; their holding it is a monstrous injustice to the regular army.”¹

¹ Parl. Deb.
vi. 652, 690.
Ann. Reg.
1806, 48, 50.

10.
Reply of the
former Min-
isters on the
subject.

To these admirable arguments it was answered by Lord Castlereagh and Mr Canning—“At no period of our history has the science, uniformity, and discipline of the British troops been comparable to what it is at this moment; and for these immense benefits, the profession at large are aware we are more indebted to the improvements of the present Commander-in-chief (the Duke of York) than any other individual in existence. Under his able administration, the army is considerably superior in number to what it ever was at any former period.* The recruiting, as it now exists, is steadily producing sixteen thousand soldiers a-year; and when the act for its future regulation is generally enforced, which is not yet the case, this number may be expected to be greatly increased. Is this a crisis to break up a system producing, and likely to produce, such

* Regulars and Militia,	1st January 1802,	.	242,440
.. ..	1st January 1804,	.	234,005
.. ..	1st March 1806,	.	267,554

results? The average tear and wear of the army is about fifteen thousand a-year; so that the present system is not only adequate to the maintenance of its numbers, but likely to lead to its increase. The proposed alteration on the term of service in the army is one of the most momentous that parliament can be called on to discuss; and for this above all other reasons, that the change once introduced is irreparable; be it good or be it bad in its results, it cannot be departed from; for when the soldiers have once tasted the sweets of limited, they will never submit to the restraints of unlimited, service. Surely, on so vital a subject, and where a false step once taken is irretrievable, it is expedient to proceed with caution, and make the experiment on a small scale before we organise all our defenders on the new system.

“The system of enlisting for a limited period is no novelty; its application on a great and universal scale alone is so. For the last three years, our endeavours have been directed, while a superior encouragement was held out to persons entering for general service, to obtain at the same time the utmost possible number of men for limited service in the army—both in the army of reserve, and latterly under the Additional Force Act. If, then, we have failed in obtaining an adequate supply of men even under a limited scale, both in time and space, how can we expect to obtain that advantage by taking away one of these limitations? If, indeed, we could not, under the present system, obtain an adequate force liable to be detached abroad, there might be a necessity for some change in our system; but when we have one hundred and sixty-five thousand men liable to be sent abroad, and the only check upon so employing them is the necessity of not weakening ourselves too much at home, why should we preclude ourselves from raising, by the present method, such a description of force as experience has proved, in this country at least, is most easily obtained? The expiry of the soldiers’ term of service must, independent of any casualties, produce a large chasm in the army; and what security have we, that if the whole or the greater part of the army is raised in that way, a great, it may be a fatal, breach may not at some future period occur in our ranks

11.
The limited
enlistment
already par-
tially in
operation.

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at the very time when their services are most required? What the inconvenience of the soldiers being entitled to their discharge at the end of each period during a war is likely to prove upon experience, may be judged of by recollecting how embarrassing this system some years back was found to be in the militia, notwithstanding the great comparative facility of replacing men when serving at home—an embarrassment so great, that it led as a matter of necessity to the extension of the service in that branch of our military system. What reason is there to suppose that the soldiers in the regular army will not be as prone as their brethren in the militia to take advantage of the option of a discharge when their title to demand it arrives? And if so, and this heavy periodical drain be added to the existing casualties of the troops, what chance have we of keeping up a force which even now wants twenty-five thousand men to complete its ranks?

12.
The circumstances of Great Britain peculiar, and without precedent in those of any foreign state.

“It is in vain to refer to foreign states as affording precedents in point; their situation is totally different from ours. In Russia unlimited service prevails, and the same was the case in Austria during the best days of the monarchy. In 1797 a similar regulation to the one under discussion was passed prospectively for the future, to take effect at the expiration of a certain number of years, but it has not yet, I believe, been acted upon; and if it has, the disasters of Ulm and Hohenlinden afford but little reason to recommend its adoption. Napoleon’s soldiers are all raised by the conscription for unlimited service; and although, in the old French monarchy, troops in sufficient numbers were certainly obtained by voluntary enlistment for limited periods, yet the period of service was more extended than that now proposed; and the circumstances of that country, abounding in men, with few colonies to protect, and still fewer manufactures to draw off its superfluous hands, and a strong military spirit in all classes, can afford no precedent for this country, where employment from the prevalence of manufactures is so much more frequent—whose population is by nearly a half less—which is burdened with a vast colonial empire, all parts of which require defence—and where the natural bent of the people is rather to the sea than the land

service. Nor is the reference to our East India possessions more fortunate; for the enlistment for a limited period prevailed in the Company's European regiments for a number of years, yet their battalions raised in this way were always weak in numbers and inefficient, and were all reduced on that very account during Lord Cornwallis's first government of India. All the prepossessions of Mr Pitt were in favour of limited service—his opinions on this subject were repeatedly stated to the House. The opinions of a great variety of military men were taken on the subject; but these opinions were so much divided, that he arrived at the conclusion that the inconveniences and risks with which the change would be attended more than counterbalanced its probable advantages.

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“The proposed changes on the volunteer force appear to be still more objectionable. Admitting that it is desirable to reduce the great expense of that part of our establishment; allowing that, now that the corps have attained a considerable degree of efficiency, it may be advisable to diminish considerably the number of days in which they are to serve at the public expense, is that any reason for substituting a tumultuary array, without the dress, discipline, or habits of soldiers, for a body of men qualified not only to act together, but capable, if drafted into the militia or the line, of at once acting with regular soldiers? Will the volunteer corps exist for any length of time under so marked a system of discouragement as it is proposed to impose upon them, without pay, without rank, without public favour? And is this the moment, when the whole military force of the Continent, with the exception of Russia, is in the hands of our enemies, to incur the hazard of substituting, for a voluntary disciplined, a motley array of undisciplined forces, and run the risk of exciting the disaffection of the powerful bands, who at the call of their sovereign have so nobly come forward for the public defence?¹

13.
Arguments
against the
reduction of
the volunteer
force.

¹ Parl. Deb.
vi. 652, 706.

“At the commencement of the present war we raised eight hundred thousand men by the operation of the ballot. That system has its evils; but when it is indispensable in a given time to raise a large force for the public service, there is no alternative. In recognising this right, however, which flows necessarily from the acknowledged

14.
And in favour
of raising the
additional
force required
by ballot.

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title of the sovereign power to call for the assistance, in times of public danger, of all its subjects, parliament has been careful to fence it round with all the safeguards which the exercise of a prerogative so liable to abuse will admit of: it is determined by lot; the person drawn has the option to provide a substitute; and this is the footing upon which the militia stands. A still further limitation exists where the call is made, not upon the individual, but the district; and the district is allowed the option, instead of providing the man, to pay a fine; and this is the principle on which the Additional Force Bill, at present in operation, which we are now called on to repeal, is founded. But the ballot for the militia is, by the proposed change, to cease on the termination of the war; it then ceases to be a militia, and becomes a part of the regular force raised by the Crown. The act proposed to be repealed is producing at the rate of eighteen thousand recruits a-year, besides the men raised by ballot for the militia. Proposing, as the ministers now do, to abandon at once both these resources, are they prepared to show that the new measures will supply this great deficiency? Would it not be expedient first to try the experiment on a small scale, to be assured of its success, before we commit the fortunes of the state to the result of the experiment? It is an old military maxim, not to manœuvre in presence of an enemy; but the measures now in agitation do a great deal worse, for they not only change the composition of your force, but shake the loyalty and submission of the soldiers, in presence of the most formidable military power Europe has ever witnessed.”¹

¹ Parl. Deb.
vi. 967, 990.

15.
The bill
passes.

The bill met with a most strenuous opposition, although the early divisions which took place upon it evinced a preponderance in favour of ministers;* but it at length passed both Houses by a decided majority, the number in the Peers being ninety-seven to forty—giving a majority to ministers of fifty-seven. The clauses regarding the volunteer force, however, were abandoned or modified in the ultimate stages of the discussion, the effect of the bill as to them being limited to a proper restriction of the

* The division which decided the principle of the bill took place on March 14, 1806, when the numbers were—Ayes, 235; Noes, 119: Majority, 116.—*Ann. Reg.* 1806, p. 54.

period of permanent duty. But the great principle of enlisting for a limited service was by its passing introduced into the British army, and has never since been totally abandoned; and, considering the great achievements which it subsequently wrought, and the vast consumption of life which the new system adequately supplied, its introduction is to be regarded as a memorable era in the history of the war.¹

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¹ Ann. Reg.
1806, 62.

If called upon to decide in favour of one or other of the able arguments urged on the opposite sides of this important question, it might perhaps be no easy matter to say on which the weight of authority and reason preponderated. But experience, the great resolver of political difficulties, has now settled the matter, and proved that Mr Windham rightly appreciated the principles of human nature on this subject, and was warranted in his belief that, without any increase of pay, limited service, with additional encouragements in the way of retiring allowances and privileges, would provide a force perfectly adequate even to the most extensive military operations of Great Britain. From the official returns, it appears that the rate of recruiting rose in a rapid and striking manner after the system of limited service was adopted, and, before the expiration of a year from the time it was first put in force, had largely increased the annual supply of soldiers for the army.* Though variously modified, the same system has ever since prevailed, at least to a certain extent, with perfect success in every branch of the service; and to its influence, combined with the improved regulations for its discipline, pay, and retiring allowances, great part of the glories of the Peninsular campaigns is to be ascribed. On examining the

16.
Reflections
on the mea-
sure.

* OLD SYSTEM.

	Recruits
January 1, to July 1, 1805,	10,923
July 1, to January 1, 1806,	9,042
January 1, to July 1, 1806,	10,783
July 1, to January 1, 1807,	6,276

(New system in operation since January 1, 1807.)

NEW SYSTEM.

	Recruits.
January 1, to July 1, 1807,	11,412
July 1, to January 1, 1808,	7,734
Rate of recruiting from January 1 to April 1,	21,000
Ditto from April 1 to July 1, 1808,	24,000

—Ann. Reg. 1806, 40, 41.

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confident opinions expressed by many eminent and respectable military men on the impossibility of providing an adequate supply of force for the English army by such a method, it is difficult to avoid the inference, that implicit reliance is not always to be placed on the views of practical men in legislative improvements; that their tenacity to existing institutions is often as great as the proneness of theoretical innovators to perilous change. Little credit is to be given to the most eminent professional persons when they claim for the people of a particular country an exemption from the ordinary principles of human nature; and true political wisdom is to be gathered, not by discarding the lessons of experience, but extending the basis on which they are founded, and drawing conclusions rather from a general deduction of the history of mankind, than the limited views, however respectably supported, of particular individuals.

17.
Error of the
ministerial
plan so far as
regards the
volunteers.

To these observations on Mr Windham's military system, however, one exception must be made in regard to that part of his plan which related to the volunteers. There can be no doubt that in this particular he did not display the same knowledge of human nature which was elsewhere conspicuous in his designs. Admitting that the volunteers were very far indeed from being equal to the regular forces; that their cost was exceedingly burdensome, and that they could not be relied on as more than auxiliaries to the army; still in that capacity they were most valuable, and not only qualified to render some service by themselves, but, as forming a reserve to replenish the ranks of the regular forces, of incalculable importance. The campaigns of 1812 and 1813 demonstrate of what vast service such a force, progressively incorporated with the battalions of the regular army, comes to be when the ranks of the latter are thinned in real warfare, and how rapidly they acquire the discipline and efficiency of veteran troops. In this view the tumultuary array of Mr Windham, without the clothing, discipline, or organisation of soldiers, could have been of little or no utility. Nor is it of less moment that the volunteer system, by interesting vast multitudes in the occupations, feelings, and honour of soldiers, powerfully contributes to nourish and expand that military ardour in

all ranks which is indispensable to great martial achievements. Veteran troops, indeed, may smile when they behold novices in the military art imitating the dress, manners, and habits of soldiers; but the experienced commander, versed in the regulating principles of human exertion, will not deem such aids to patriotic ardour of little importance, and willingly fan the harmless vanity which makes the young aspirant imagine that his corps has in a few weeks acquired the efficiency of regular forces. Imitation even of the uniform, air, and habit of soldiers, is a powerful principle in transferring the military ardour to the breasts of civilians. Philopœmen judged wisely when he recommended his officers to be sedulously elegant in their habiliments, arms, and appointments. He was well acquainted with human nature who said, that to women and soldiers dress is a matter of no ordinary importance. Many nations have been saved from slavery by the passion for what an inexperienced observer would call mere foppery.

In later times the system of temporary service has been in a great degree superseded in the British army, and nearly all recruits are now enlisted for life. And in weighing the comparative merit of these two opposite systems, it will probably be found that the plan of enlisting men for limited periods is the most advisable in nations in whom the military spirit runs high, or the advantages of the military service are such as to secure at all times an ample supply of young men for the army, and where it is of importance to train as large a portion as possible of the population to the skilful use of arms, in order to form a reserve for the regular force in periods of danger; and that enlistment for life is more applicable to those nations or situations where no national danger is apprehended, and it is the object of government rather to secure a permanent body of disciplined men, subject to no cause of decrease but the ordinary casualties of the service, in the ordinary pacific duties, than spread far and wide through the nation the passion for glory or the use of arms. A provident administration will always have a system established, capable either of contraction or expansion, which embraces both methods of raising

18.
Temporary
service now
in a great
degree aban-
doned.

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19.
Abolition of
the slave
trade.

soldiers ; and this, for nearly thirty years, has been the case with the British army.

Important as the matter thus submitted to parliament in its ultimate consequences undoubtedly was, when it is recollected what a great and glorious part the British army bore in the close of the struggle, it yet yielded in magnitude to the next great subject which the new ministers brought forward for consideration. This was the **ABOLITION OF THE SLAVE TRADE** ; a measure which, in its remote effects, seems destined to affect the fortunes of half the human race. This great change was not finally completed till the following session of parliament ; but the preparatory steps were taken in this, and it belongs properly to the present period of English history, which treats of the measures of the Whig administration.

20.
Arguments
against the
change by the
West India
interest.

It was urged by Mr Hibbert and the advocates of the West India interest, both in and out of parliament, "The British West India islands were settled, and have ever been cultivated under the solemn faith of those charters and proclamations, and those acts of parliament, which have confirmed the West India islands in the most perfect assurance that they should continue to receive supplies of negroes from Africa ; the agriculture of these colonies cannot be carried on except by means of slave labour ; and the cultivation of their interior, which is indispensable to their security, cannot be promoted if the slave trade be abolished. If this bill shall pass into a law, the very worst effects may be anticipated from the change, not only to the colonies themselves, but the general interests of the empire. The commerce which the West Indies maintain is the most important of the whole British dominions. It pays annually in duties to the public treasury upwards of £3,000,000 ; employs more than sixteen thousand seamen ; contributes one-third to the whole exports, and one-third to the imports ; takes off £6,000,000 a-year worth of domestic manufactures ; and is pre-eminently distinguished above all others by this important feature, that it is all within ourselves, and not liable, like other foreign trade, to be turned to our disadvantage on a rupture with the power with whom it is conducted. This measure, however, if carried into effect, must in a few years diminish

the property vested in the British West India islands, and open the means of rapidly advancing the progress of rival colonies, to whom the advantages of a full supply of negroes will still remain open. It must forbid the supply of losses to the negro population, which originate in accident or diseases peculiar to the climate, and which the most humane and provident management is unable altogether to prevent; stop the completion of establishments already begun; and altogether prevent the extension of cultivation into the interior of the islands, without which they can never either attain a state of security, or reach the degree of wealth and splendour of which they are susceptible.

“The most disastrous effects, both to individuals and the public, may be anticipated from the ultimate consequences of the measure under consideration. Not to mention the confusion and ruin which it must occasion to families; the capital now sunk in cultivation which it must destroy; the calamities attendant on revolt and insurrection which it will in all probability occasion; the emigration it will induce in all who have the means of extricating themselves or their capital from so precarious a situation; the despair and apathy which it will spread through those who have not means of escape; what incalculable evils must it produce among the black population? The abolition of the slave trade is a question which it is at all times perilous to agitate, from the intimate connexion which it has in the minds of the negroes with the abolition of slavery itself, and the necessary effect which it must have in perpetuating the discussion of that subject in the mother country, to the total destruction of all security in the planters, or repose in the minds of the slave population. From the moment that this bill passes, every white man in the West Indies is sleeping on the edge of a volcano, which may at any moment explode and shiver him to atoms. Throwing out of view altogether all considerations of interest, and viewing this merely as a question of humanity, it is impossible to contemplate without the utmost alarm the perils with which it is fraught. The existence of a Black power in the neighbourhood of the most important island of the British West Indies, affords a memorable and dreadful lesson, recorded in characters of blood, of the issue of doctrines

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21.
Alleged evil
effects of abo-
lition of the
trade.

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¹ Parl. Deb.
vi. 831.22.
The slave
trade asserted
not to be the
cause of the
degraded
state of Africa.

intimately, constantly, and inseparably connected with the abolition of the slave trade. It is impossible to contemplate that volcano without the deepest alarm, nor forget that its horrors were produced by well-meant, but ill-judged, philanthropy, similar to that which is the prime mover in the present question.¹

“ It is a total mistake to suppose that the evils, enormous and deplorable as they are, of Central Africa arise from the slave trade. Those evils are the consequence of the cruel habits and barbarous manners of its inhabitants; they existed for thousands of years before the slave trade was heard of, and will continue for thousands of years after it is extinct. Civilise the interior of that vast continent—humanise the manners of its inhabitants—abolish the savage practice of selling or putting to death captives made in war, and you indeed make a mighty step towards extirpating the evils which we all lament. But as long as these savage customs prevail; as long as the torrid zone is inhabited by a thousand tribes engaged in contests with each other, and with all of whom slavery to prisoners made in war is the only alternative for death, it is hopeless to expect that the stoppage even of the whole vent which the purchase of negroes by Europeans affords, would sensibly affect the general prevalence of the slave traffic. What are the fifty thousand whom they annually transport across the Atlantic, to the innumerable multitudes who are driven across the Sahara Desert, or descend to Egypt for the vast markets of the Mussulman world? But to suppose that the partial stoppage of it in the British dominions, that the prohibition to transport the fifteen thousand negroes who are annually brought to our shores, could have a beneficial effect, is ridiculous. So far from producing such a result, its tendency will be diametrically the reverse: it will drive the slave trade from the superior to the inferior channel; from the great merchants of Liverpool, who have done so much—for their own interest, perhaps, but still done so much—to diminish its horrors, to the Spaniards and Portuguese, who are as yet totally unskilled in its management, and treat the captives with the utmost barbarity. As our own colonies decline from the stoppage of this supply of labourers, those of the other nations who have not fettered themselves in the

same way will augment; the cultivation of sugar for the European market will ultimately pass into other hands, and we shall in the end find that we have cut off the right arm of our commerce and naval strength only to augment the extent and increase the horrors of the slave trade throughout the world.”¹

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¹ Parl. Deb.
vi. 979, 993.

On the other hand, it was argued by Mr Wilberforce, Lord Howick, and Lord Grenville—“A higher principle than considerations of mere expedience—the dictates of justice, require that this infamous traffic should be abolished. Were it merely a question of humanity, we might consider how far we should carry our interference; were the interests of the British empire alone involved, it might possibly be a matter of expedience to stop a little short of total abolition. But in this instance, imperious justice requires us to abolish the slave trade. Is it to be endured that robbery is to be permitted on account of its profits? Justice is still the same; and you are called upon in this measure, not only to do justice to the oppressed and injured natives of Africa, but to your own planters; to interfere between them and their otherwise certain destruction; and, despite their fears, despite their passions, despite their prejudices, rescue them from impending ruin. This trade is the most criminal that any country can be engaged in. When it is recollected what guilt has been incurred in tearing the Africans, by thousands and tens of thousands, from their families, their friends, their social ties, their country, and dooming them to a life of slavery and misery: when it is considered also, that the continuance of this atrocious traffic must inevitably terminate in the ruin of the planters engaged in it, surely no doubt can remain that its instant abolition is called for by every motive of justice and expedience.

23.

Arguments of
Mr Wilber-
force and
others for the
abolition.

“Much is said of the impossibility of maintaining the supply of negroes in the West Indies, if the slave trade is abolished. Are we, then, to believe that the Divine precept, ‘Increase and multiply,’ does not extend to those islands? that the fires of youth, adequate to the maintenance and growth of the human species in all other countries and ages of the world, are there

24.

Their answer
to the asser-
tion of the
necessity of
the trade to
maintain the
supply of
negroes.

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alone, in the midst of plenty, unequal to their destined end? But the fact is adverse to this monstrous supposition; and it is now distinctly proved that the slave colonies are perfectly adequate to maintain their own numbers.* The excess of deaths above births in Jamaica is now only 1-24 per cent; and when it is recollected that the registers of mortality include the deaths among the negroes who are newly arrived and set to work, which always amounts, between those who perish in the harbours and shortly after being set to work, to at least 10 per cent, it is evident that the numbers of the settled Africans are more than maintained by their own increase. Nor is the argument that the importation of negroes is requisite to cultivate the waste lands in the interior of the islands better founded. If the numbers of the Africans increase, it is altogether incredible that their labours should not be adequate to clear the wastes of those diminutive islands. According to the most moderate computation, it would require the slave trade to be continued for two centuries to cultivate the whole interior of Jamaica and Trinidad; and can it be endured that so frightful a traffic as this, fraught as it must be with the tearing of above two millions of Africans from their families and country, should be continued for such a period, for an object which, in one-fourth of the time, might by the native increase of their numbers in those islands be attained?†

25.
Alleged
gradual im-
provement of
the race
should the
trade be
abolished.

“Let us, then, instantly abolish this infamous traffic; and we may then with confidence look forward to the period when the slaves, become in a great degree the natives of the islands, will feel the benefits of the protection afforded them: and they may gradually be prepared

* Excess of deaths above births in Jamaica from }	1698 to 1730,	3½ per cent.
.. ..	1730 to 1755,	2½ per cent.
.. ..	1755 to 1796,	1¾ per cent.
.. ..	1769 to 1780,	3-5th per cent.
.. ..	1780 to 1800,	1-24th per cent.

—*Parl. Deb.* viii. 658.

† It is now completely demonstrated, by an experiment on the greatest scale, that the African race, even when in a state of slavery, is not only able to maintain its own numbers, but rapidly to increase them. In the slave States of America there are 2,200,000 negroes; and from 1790 to 1830, the whites have augmented in the proportion of 80 to a hundred; but the blacks in that of 112 to 100. The proportion since that time has been rather, though but little, in favour of the increase of the white race.—*Tocqueville's Democracy in America*, ii. 345, 346, note; and *Census 1841, America*.

for that character, when the blessings of freedom may be securely extended to them. Throughout all history we shall find that slavery has been eradicated by means of the captives being first transformed into predial labourers, attached to the soil, and from that gradually ascending to real freedom. We look forward to the period when the negroes of the West India islands, become labourers rather than slaves, will feel an interest in the welfare and prosperity of the country which has extended to them these benefits, and when they may be securely called on to share largely in the defence of those islands, in which at present they are only a source of weakness. The grand, the decisive advantage which recommends the abolition of the slave trade is, that by closing that supply of foreign negroes to which the planters have hitherto been accustomed to trust for all their undertakings, we shall *compel* them to promote the multiplication of the slaves on their own estates; and it is obvious that this cannot be done without improving their physical and moral condition. Thus, not only will the inhuman traffic itself be prevented, in so far at least as the inhabitants of this country are concerned, but a provision will be made for the progressive amelioration of the black population in the West Indies, and that, too, on the securest of all foundations, the interests and selfish desires of the masters in whose hands they are placed.

“It is in vain to argue, that, according to the barbarous customs of Africa, captives made in war are put to death, and that if the outlet of the slave trade is closed, the reproach to humanity arising from the sale of captives will be prevented from taking place. The most recent and intelligent travellers, on the contrary, have informed us, what every consideration on the subject *a priori* would lead us to expect, that the existence of the slave trade is itself, and ever has been, the great bar to the civilisation of the interior of Africa, by the temptation held out to the chiefs on the coast to engage in the traffic of negroes, and the continual encouragement thus afforded to the princes in the interior to carry on constant wars, from the vast profit with which the sale of their captives is attended. It forms, in fact, with a great many of these robber chieftains, a chief branch of revenue. If we would

26.
Its demo-
ralising effect
on Africa.

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promote, therefore, the great and truly Christian work of civilising Central Africa, we must first commence with abolishing the slave trade ; for as long as it continues, the selfishness and rapacity of the native chiefs will never cease to chain its unhappy inhabitants to a life of violence and rapacity in the powerful, of misery and degradation in the poor. The argument that, if we do not carry on the slave trade, some other nations will, possibly with less commiseration for the sufferings of the captives, if admitted, would shake to their foundation every principle of public and private morality. At that rate every band of robbers might plead in their justification, that if they did not knock down and plunder travellers, other banditti might do the same, and possibly superadd murder to their other atrocities, and therefore the lucrative rapine should not be discontinued. This argument, however, bad as it is, has not even the merit of being founded on fact. If we abolish the slave trade, who is to take it up ? The Americans have already preceded us in the race of humanity, and fixed a period in 1808 when the traffic is immediately to cease ; and a bill is at present in progress through their legislature, to affix the penalty of death to a violation of this enactment. How are France and Spain to carry it on, when they have hardly a ship on the ocean ? Sweden never engaged in it. There remains only Portugal, and where is she to get capital to carry it on ?

27.
Abolition
tends to pro-
mote the
gradual abro-
gation of
slavery itself.

“The dangers, so powerfully drawn, as likely to result from this measure, are really to be apprehended, not from it, but from another, with which it has no connexion, viz., the immediate emancipation of the negroes. This, it is said, flows necessarily from the step now about to be taken ; if you do not follow it up in this manner, you stop short half-way in your own principles ; in fact, the ulterior measure, if the first be adopted, cannot be averted. It is to be hoped, indeed, that this great step will, in the end, lead to the abolition of slavery in all our colonies ; but not in the way or with the dangers which are anticipated. On the contrary, it is here that another of the great benefits of the measure under consideration is to be found. By the effects of this measure it is to be hoped *slavery will gradually wear out without the intervention of any positive law*, in like manner as it did in a certain degree in the

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states of Greece and Rome, and some parts of the states of modern Europe, where slaves have been permitted to work out and purchase their own freedom; and as has been permitted with the happiest effects in the colonies of Spain and Portugal. In America, measures for the gradual emancipation of the negroes have been adopted, and nothing could conduce more powerfully to insubordination, than if, by the continuance of the trade, similar steps were not to be induced in the West India islands, and the slaves there were perpetually tantalised by the sight of the superior comforts of their brethren on the main-land. The dangers apprehended *would indeed be real, if immediate emancipation were to be proposed*, for that would produce horrors similar to those which have happened in St Domingo. But nothing of that kind is in contemplation; on the contrary, it is expressly to exclude them, and induce that gradual emancipation which is called for, alike by justice to the planters and the interests of the slaves themselves, that the measure under discussion is proposed.”¹

¹ Parl. Deb.
viii. 652, 666,
947, 955.

The latter arguments, enforced with much eloquence, and supported by the great principles of Christian charity, prevailed with the legislature. By a series of enactments, passed in the course of the session of 1806, the slave trade was restrained within very narrow limits; and at length, in the succeeding session, it was entirely abolished, and the penalty of transportation affixed to every British subject engaged in it. The numbers were, in the Commons, 283 to 16—majority 267; in the Peers, 100 to 36—majority 64: and thus was the stain of trafficking in human flesh for ever torn from the British name.² Lord Grenville concluded his speech with these eloquent words—“I cannot conceive any consciousness more truly gratifying than must be enjoyed by that eminent person (Mr Wilberforce), on finding a measure to which he has devoted the labour of his life carried into effect—a measure so truly benevolent, so admirably conducive to the virtuous prosperity of his country and the welfare of mankind—a measure which will diffuse happiness among millions now in existence, and for which his memory will be blessed by millions yet unborn.”³

28.
The abolition
is carried.
June 11.

Feb. 23, 1807.

² Parl. Deb.
viii. 672, 995.

³ Parl. Deb.
viii. 664.

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29.

Deplorable
effects of the
change
hitherto on
the negro
race.

There can be no question that this great step was recommended by every consideration of justice and humanity; nevertheless its effects hitherto have been in the highest degree deplorable. Never was there a more striking example than this subject has afforded in its later stages, of the important truth that mere purity of intention is not sufficient in legislative measures, and that unless human designs are carried into execution with the requisite degree of foresight and wisdom, they often become the sources of the most heart-rending and irremediable calamities. The prophecy of Mr Hibbert and the opponents of the abolition, that the slave trade, instead of ceasing, would only change hands, and at length fall into the management of desperate wretches who would double its horrors, has been too fatally verified, and to an extent even greater than they anticipated. From the returns laid before parliament, it appears that the slave trade is now *four times* as extensive as it was in 1789, when European philanthropy first interfered in St Domingo in favour of the African race, and twice as great as it was when the efforts of Mr Wilberforce procured its abolition in the British dominions. Great and deplorable as were the sufferings of the captives in crossing the Atlantic, in the large and capacious Liverpool slave ships, they are as nothing compared to those which have since been, and are still, endured by the negroes in the hands of the Spanish and Portuguese traders, where several hundred wretches are stowed between decks in a space not three feet high; and in addition to the anguish inseparable from a state of captivity, they are made to endure, for weeks together, the horrors of the black-hole of Calcutta. Nearly two hundred thousand captives, chained together in this frightful manner, now annually cross the Atlantic; and they are brought, not to the comparatively easy life of the British West India islands, but to the desperate servitude of Cuba or Brazil; in the latter of which several hundred negroes are worked, like animals, in droves together, without a single female among them; and, without any attempt to perpetuate their race,¹ they are worn down by their cruel taskmasters to the grave by a lingering

¹ Walsh's
Brazil, ii.
474, 485.

process, which on an average terminates their existence in seven years!*

This lamentable and heart-rending result of such persevering and enlightened benevolence, however, must not lead us to doubt the soundness or humanity of the principles which Mr Wilberforce so eloquently advocated, or to imagine that the general rules of morality are inapplicable to this question, and that here alone in human affairs it is lawful to do evil that good may come of it. The observation, that it was our duty to clear our hands of the iniquity, leaving it to Providence to eradicate the evil in others at the appointed time, was decisive of the justice of the measure; the evident necessity which it imposed on the planters of attending, for their own sakes, to the comforts of the negroes, and providing means for the multiplication of their numbers, conclusive as to its expedience. It is not the abolition of the slave trade, but the subsequent continuance of ruinous fiscal exactions, and at last the irretrievable step of unqualified emancipation, which have given this deplorable activity to the foreign slave trade. The increase in the foreign slave colonies for the last twenty years, at a time when the British West India islands were comparatively stationary, has been so rapid, that

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30.

But they are not chargeable on its authors, but subsequent changes.

* The number of slaves annually imported into the slave countries of the world from Africa in 1789, was somewhat under 50,000, of which about 15,000 crossed in English vessels—now the number is at least 200,000. It appears from the Consular Returns to parliament, that in 1829, 74,653 slaves were embarked for *Brazil alone* from the African coast, of whom 4579 died in the short passage of one month; and in the first half of 1830 the numbers were no less than 47,258, of whom 8 per cent died on the passage. At the same period 13,000 were annually imported into the Havannah, and at least an equal number into the other slave colonies, making in the year 1830 about 130,000.¹ But these numbers, great as they are, have now received a vast increase from the effects of the British slave emancipation act, passed in 1833. In fifteen months, ending January 1835, there sailed from the single port of Havannah 170 slave ships, capable of containing, on an average, each at least 400 persons; the importation of slaves into Cuba is now above 55,000 a-year, while the numbers imported into Brazil, from the stimulus given to slave labour by the anticipated decline of produce in the British islands consequent on that measure, have increased in nearly the same proportion. Nor is it surprising that, in spite of all the efforts of British government, and all the vigilance of the British cruisers, this infernal traffic should now advance at this accelerated pace; for such is the demand for slaves, occasioned by the continual decline in the cultivation of sugar in the British West India islands, under the combined influence of heavy taxation and the emancipation act, that the profit on a single cargo of slaves imported into the Havannah is 180 per cent, and the adventurers cannot be considered as losers if one vessel arrives safe out of *three* despatched from the coast of Africa.—*Parl. Pap.* 1830, A. 115-116.

Enormous present extent and horrors of the slave trade.

¹ Parl. Pap. 1830. B. 82, 89, 138.

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it is evident some powerful and lasting causes have been at work to occasion it.* These causes are to be found, in a great measure, in the heavy duties on British colonial produce, amounting at first to 30s., then to 27s., and latterly to 24s., on each hundredweight of sugar, from which the foreign growers were exempted in the supply of foreign markets. This enormous burden, which, on an average of prices since 1820, has been very nearly seventy-five per cent on that species of produce, has, notwithstanding all their efforts, for the most part, if not entirely, fallen on the producers.†

Immense increase of produce in the slave colonies of late years. Comparatively stationary condition of the British islands.

* Twelve years ago, the only exports of Puerto-Rico were cattle and coffee, and the only sugar she received was from importation. In 1833 she exported 33,750 tons—more than a sixth of the whole British consumption. The export of the sugar from Cuba was on an average of 1814, 1815, and 1816, 51,000 tons; in 1833 it had risen to 120,000 tons. In 1814, 1815, and 1816, the average exports of sugar from Brazil were 26,250 tons; in 1833, though a bad year, the exports were 70,970 tons. The increase, since the emancipation act passed, has been still greater; but no official accounts of these years have yet been made public.—See *Parl. Report* “On the Commercial State of the West Indies,” p. 286.

On the other hand, the produce of the British West India islands, during the same period, has been comparatively stationary. The colonial produce exported from those islands to Great Britain in the year 1812, was 154,200 tons of sugar, and 6,290,000 gallons of rum; in 1830, 185,000; and in 1833, 205,000 tons of sugar, and 7,892,000 gallons of rum: the shipping in the former period was 180,000; in the latter, 263,330 tons. The total value of the produce of the islands in the former period was £18,516,000; in the latter, including all the colonies gained by the peace of Paris in 1814, only £22,496,000.—PEBRER, 399; COLQUHOUN, 378-381; PORTER'S *Parl. Tables*, 124-126.

Enormous fiscal injustice to which they have been exposed.

† There is no opinion more erroneous than that commonly entertained, that the import duties on sugar, like other taxes on consumption, fall on the purchaser. There is always, indeed, a struggle between the producer and consumer, as to who should bear the burden—but it is not always in the power of the former to throw it on the latter. In this instance the attempt has almost totally failed. It appears from the curious table of prices compiled by Mr Colquhoun, that even during the high prices of the years from 1807 to 1812, the West India proprietors paid from a *third* to a *half* of the duties on sugar, without being able to lay it on the consumers; the average of what they paid for those years being £1,115,251 per annum. The estimated revenue of these proprietors, during these years, was under £4,000,000; so that, at that period, they paid twenty per cent on their incomes to government. In addition to this, it was proved by the documents laid before the committee of the House of Commons in February 1831, that an annual burden of £1,023,299 was laid on the British West India islands, in consequence of the enhancement of the price of necessary articles to which they were exposed under the restrictive system. In this way, even under the high prices from 1807 to 1812, they were paying at least fifty per cent on their incomes in taxation; and as the price, since that time, of their produce, has fallen at least *two-thirds*, with a reduction of only a *ninth* (3s.) on the import duty, it may be safely concluded, that, since 1820, the West India proprietors have paid, directly and indirectly, at least *seventy-five* per cent on their income to government; and in the years when prices were low, at least a hundred per cent. Nothing more is required to explain the distressed condition of these colonies, even before the emancipation bill was passed, which at once, without any equivalent, confiscated at least sixty per cent of their remaining property. The value of slaves was estimated by Colquhoun in 1812, at £55 a-head; but in 1833, when the act passed, it had risen to at least £75 overhead, notwithstanding the change in the value of money; and the compensation money (£20,000,000 on six hundred and thirty-four thousand slaves) will not, after all deductions are made, yield £25 a-head, or more than

Nor is this all—the precipitate and irretrievable step of emancipation, forced on the legislature by benevolent but incautious and mistaken feeling, has already occasioned so great a decline in the produce of the British West Indies, and excited such general expectations of a still greater and increasing deficiency, that the impulse thereby given to the foreign slave trade to fill up the gap has been unbounded, and it is to be feared, almost irremediable.* Since the disastrous measure of emancipation, the agricultural produce of the British West Indies has declined fully a half; in some branches of produce fallen to a *third* of its former amount; and such

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31.

Ruinous
effects of
emancipation
of negroes.

thirty-three per cent to the proprietors. Few such instances of the destruction of property by fiscal and legislative enactments are to be found in the history of mankind.—See PEBRER, 394 and 397; COLQUHOUN, 59, 325; and *Commons' Reports on West India Affairs*, 7th February 1831.

It is frequently said that the increase in the produce of these colonies since the peace, is a proof that their alleged distresses are either unfounded or exaggerated. This is a complete mistake; the planters had no other way to meet the enormous fiscal burdens laid upon them, since a diminution in the cost of production was out of the question, after the abolition of the slave trade, but by making the utmost exertions to augment its quantity; and thence the increase of colonial produce, which, by perpetuating the lowness of price, rendered it totally impossible for them to lay the enormous import duty, now one hundred per cent, on the consumers. Like a man sunk in a bottomless bog, all the efforts they could make for their extrication, tended only to land them deeper and more irretrievably in the mire.

* The following table shows the decline of colonial produce exported from Jamaica under the first year of the emancipation act.

Sugar.			Rum.		Coffee.		
Years.	Cwts.	Hogsheads.	Puncheons	Gallons.	Casks.	lbs.	
1834	1,525,154	79,465	30,676	3,189,949	22,384	17,859,277	
1835	1,319,023	68,087	27,038	2,660,687	13,495	10,489,292	
Decrease,		206,131	11,378	3,638	529,262	8,889	7,369,985

Rapid decline
of West India
produce since
emancipation.

Taking an average of these various sorts of produce, it is evident that, notwithstanding an uncommonly fine season, and the vigorous exertions of the stipendiary magistrates, the produce of the island fell off in one year nearly a fourth of its total amount! The parliament of Jamaica, in their address to the governor of the island on August 10, 1835, observed, “There never was a finer season or more promising appearance of canes; but, nevertheless, the crop is greatly deficient, and many British ships have in consequence returned with half cargoes, some with none at all. Our decided opinion is, that each succeeding crop will progressively become worse. In a few cases the apprentices do work for wages; but the opposite disposition so immeasurably preponderates, that no dependence whatever can be placed on voluntary labour. Knowing, as we do, the prevailing reluctance of the negroes to work of any kind, the thefts, negligences, and outrages of every sort which are becoming of frequent occurrence; seeing large portions of our neglected cane-fields overrun with weeds, and a still larger extent of our pasture lands returning to a state of nature; seeing, in fact, desolation already overspreading the very face of the land, it is impossible for us, without abandoning the evidence of our senses, to entertain favourable anticipations, or divest ourselves of the painful conviction, that the progressive and rapid deterioration of property will continue to keep pace with the apprenticeship, and that the termination thereof must, unless strong preventive measures

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is the indolence of the black population, and their general disinclination to steady and combined industry, that cultivation is in general carried on in these islands at a loss; and the time is, it is to be feared, not far distant, when

are applied, complete the ruin of the colony." Making every allowance for the passions and exaggerations of a tropical climate, the statement here made is too strongly borne out by the decrease in the official returns, and example of the result of corresponding measures in St Domingo, to leave a doubt that they are, in the main at least, founded in truth.

The following table exhibits the official returns of the exports of the West India islands for the last fifteen years:—

Years.	Sugar.	Molasses.	Rum.	Coffee.	Cocoa.	Pimento.	Shipping	Ships.
	Cwts.	Cwts.	Gallons.	lbs.	lbs.	lbs.	Tons.	
1827	3,551,218	392,441	5,620,174	29,419,598	549,688	2,225,943	243,731	872
1828	4,313,636	508,095	6,307,294	29,987,078	454,909	2,247,893	272,800	1,013
1829	4,152,614	390,626	6,634,759	26,911,785	684,917	3,585,694	263,328	958
1830	3,912,628	249,420	6,752,799	27,460,421	711,913	3,489,318	253,872	911
1831	4,103,800	323,306	7,844,157	20,030,802	1,491,947	4,801,355	249,079	904
1832	3,773,456	558,668	4,713,809	24,678,920	618,215	1,366,183	229,117	828
1833	3,646,204	686,793	5,109,975	19,008,575	2,134,809	4,470,255	248,378	911
1834*	3,343,976	650,366	5,112,399	22,081,489	1,360,325	1,389,402	246,695	918
1835	3,524,209	507,495	5,458,317	14,855,470	439,467	2,536,358	235,179	878
1836	3,601,791	526,535	4,868,168	18,903,426	1,612,304	3,320,978	237,922	900
1837	3,306,775	575,657	4,418,349	15,577,888	1,847,145	2,026,129	226,468	855
1838†	3,520,676	638,007	4,641,210	17,538,655	2,149,637	892,974	235,195	878
1839	2,824,372	474,307	4,021,820	11,485,675	959,641	1,071,570	196,715	748
1840	2,214,764	421,141	3,780,979	12,797,039	2,374,301	999,068	181,731	697
1841	2,151,217	430,221	2,770,161	9,927,689	2,920,298	797,758	174,975	677

* Emancipation Act.

† Termination of Apprenticeship.

—*Porter's Progress of the Nation*, iii. 424, 425.

Nor has the effect of this most disastrous measure been less detrimental on the exports of Great Britain to the West Indies. These, as a matter of course, have declined with the falling off in the produce of the West Indies, and the diminished ability of its inhabitants to pay for the produce of this country, as the following table demonstrates.

BRITISH EXPORTS TO WEST INDIES IN							
1829,	.	.	.	£3,612,085	1837,	.	£3,456,745
1830,	.	.	.	2,838,448	1838,	.	3,393,441
1831,	.	.	.	2,581,959	1839,	.	3,986,598
1832,	.	.	.	2,439,808	1840,	.	3,574,970
1833,	.	.	.	2,597,589	1841,	.	2,504,004
1834,	.	.	.	2,680,024	1842,	.	2,591,425
1835,	.	.	.	3,187,540	1843,	.	2,497,671
1836,	.	.	.	3,786,453	1844,	.	2,451,471

—*Porter's Parl. Tables*, xii. 102.

Such has been the effect upon the prices of all sorts of colonial produce, of this great decline in the production of the British West India islands, that the annual consumption of sugar in Great Britain has declined since 1832 from 24 lbs. a-head to 16 lbs.; while, for this diminished quantity of 16 lbs., the price paid by the nation has been £8,000,000 annually *more* than it formerly was for the larger quantity of 24 lbs.,—that is, the nation pays annually *twice the amount nearly of the income-tax* more than it formerly did for two-thirds only of the former supply! At the same time, the effect of the measure, on the admission of its warmest advocates, has been to double the slave trade over the globe, and increase its horrors in a still greater proportion! The history of mankind fortunately affords few similar examples of the disastrous effects of ignorant zeal and misguided philanthropy.—See *Parl. Deb. June 9, 1843*. See *Customs Return, Kingston, Jamaica, 22d August 1835*; and *Address of Assembly, August 10, 1835*.

it will be totally abandoned, and these noble colonies be consigned to total ruin.

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It is in these measures that the real cause of the lamentable increase in the foreign slave trade is to be found; it is the multitude who forced on these measures, who have frustrated all the benevolent efforts of Mr Wilberforce and Mr Fox, and rendered the abolition of the slave trade in the British dominions the remote and innocent cause of boundless misfortunes to the negro race. The British slaves, since the slave trade was abolished, had become fully equal to the wants of the colonies; their numbers, without any extraneous addition, were on the increase; their condition was comfortable and prosperous beyond that of any peasantry in Europe; and large numbers were annually purchasing their freedom from the produce of their own industry. Here, then, was a *stationary* negro population, rapidly approaching the condition of the most opulent feudal serfs of Europe, and from which they might, in like manner, have been emancipated singly, as they acquired property, which all had the means of earning, without either risk to themselves, injury to their masters, or increase to the demand for foreign slave labour. But now all these admirable effects of the abolition of the slave trade have been completely frustrated, and the humane but deluded inhabitants of Great Britain are burdened with twenty millions, to ruin, in the end, their own planters, consign to barbarism their own negroes, cut off a principal branch of their naval strength, and double the slave trade in extent,* and quadruple it in horrors, throughout the world. A more striking instance never was exhibited of the necessity of attending, in political changes, not only to benevolent intentions, but prudent conduct; and of the fatal effect of those institutions which, by giving the inhabitants of a particular part of the empire an undue share in the general administration, or admitting the torrent of public feeling to sway directly the measures of government, too often

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Which are to be ascribed to the emancipation of the negroes, not to the abolition of the slave trade.

* "The number of slaves now annually carried across the Atlantic, is double what it was when Wilberforce and Clarkson commenced their philanthropic labours."—FOWELL BUXTON *on the Foreign Slave Trade*, p. 72.

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destroy prosperity the most extensive, and occasion calamities the most unbounded.*

An important change in the British system of finance was also made by the same administration, which, although not brought forward till the spring of 1807, may be fitly considered now, in order not to interrupt the narrative of the important military events which at that period occurred on the continent of Europe.

33.
Lord Henry
Petty's plan
of finance.
Jan. 29, and
March 3, 1807.

The foundation of this plan, which was brought forward by Lord Henry Petty,† on the 29th January 1807, was, that the time had now arrived when it had become expedient to make a provision for a permanent state of warfare; that the bad success of all former coalitions had demonstrated the slender foundation on which any hopes of overthrowing the military power of France on the continent of Europe must rest, while the hostile disposition and immense power of Napoleon gave little hope that any durable accommodation could be entered into with him. "All nations," said his lordship, "that still preserve the shadow even of their independence, have their eyes fixed on us as the only means of regaining the freedom they have lost. It becomes the government of Great Britain, seeing the proud eminence on which they are placed, to take an enlarged view of their whole situation, and to direct their attention to that future, which, notwithstanding the signal deliverance they have hitherto obtained, seems still pregnant with evil. Our present permanent revenue is above £32,000,000 a-year, being more than three times what it was at the close of the American war; and there can be no doubt that means might be found in additional taxes

* The British ministry who, in 1834, passed the measure of slave emancipation, are noways answerable for these consequences; on the contrary, they deserve the highest credit for the courage they displayed, in opposition to the wishes of many of their supporters, in carrying through the great grant of twenty millions to the planters—a relief so seasonable and extensive, that hitherto, at least, it has, almost entirely to the persons who received it, prevented the natural consequences of the emancipation from being felt. The torrent of public feeling was irresistible; all they could do was to moderate its effects, which, by the protracted period of apprenticeship, and the grant to the slave-owners, was done to a very great degree. The English people must answer for the measure, be its ultimate effects on themselves and the negro race good or bad. The reflection suggested is:—What is the character of national institutions which permit a measure, likely to be attended with such cruel and disastrous consequences, to be forced against their will on a reluctant government?

† Afterwards Lord Lansdowne, a distinguished member of the Whig cabinet of 1830.

to pay the interest of loans for several years to come. But looking, as it is now our duty to do, to a protracted contest, it has become indispensable to combine present measures with such a regard for the future, as may give us a reasonable prospect of being enabled to maintain it for a very long period.

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“In considering our resources, the two great objects of attention are the sinking fund and the system of raising the supplies as much as possible within the year, which has given rise to the present amount of war taxes. The first of these is a durable monument to Mr Pitt’s wisdom: it had the support of his illustrious political opponent, Mr Fox; and, however widely these two great men were divided on most other subjects, it at last received that weight of authority which arises from their entire coincidence of approbation. When this system was commenced in 1786, the sinking fund was only 1-238th part of the debt; whereas it is now 1-63d of the whole debt, and 1-42d of the unredeemed portion: a result at once striking and satisfactory, more especially when it is recollected that it has been obtained in twenty years, whereof fourteen have been years of war. The war taxes, which have been raised to their present amount chiefly by the operation of the heavy direct taxes, are, first, the treble assessed taxes introduced by Mr Pitt, and more lately the property tax which has been substituted in its room. The experience of the last year has amply demonstrated the expedience of the augmentation of that impost to ten per cent, which it was our painful duty to propose last year; for under its operation the war taxes have now reached £21,000,000 a-year, and the sinking fund amounts to £8,300,000 annually.

34.
Argument in
favour of it.
Advantages
of the sinking
fund.

“In the present state of the country, our war expenses cannot be calculated at less than thirty-two millions annually. To provide for this, independent of additional war taxes, which are now so heavy that we are not warranted in calculating on any considerable addition to their amount as likely to prove permanently productive, is the problem we have now to solve. To effect this, it is proposed in this and the three following years to raise a loan of £12,000,000; for the fourth year,

35.
Proposed
measures for
the redemp-
tion of the
successive
loans.

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or 1810, £14,000,000 ; and for the ten succeeding years, if the war should last so long, £16,000,000 annually. In each successive year in which these loans shall be raised, it is proposed to appropriate so much of the war taxes as will amount to ten per cent on the sum so raised. Out of this ten per cent the interest and charges of management are first to be defrayed, and the remainder is to constitute a sinking fund to provide for the redemption of the capital. When the funds are at 60, or interest at five per cent, such a system will extinguish each loan in fourteen years after it was contracted. The moment this is done, the war taxes impledged for the redemption of that loan should be repealed. Thus, as the loan of £12,000,000 will, on this supposition, be paid off by 1821, the £1,200,000 a-year of war taxes now pledged to its redemption, will in that year be remitted. Upon examining this system, it will be found that it may be carried on for seven years, viz. from 1807 to 1814, without impledging any part of the income tax ; so that, if peace is then concluded, the whole income tax may, without violating any part of the present system, be at once remitted—a most desirable object, as that is a burden which nothing but the last necessity should induce us to perpetuate beyond the continuance of hostilities.

36.
And for providing the charges on them.

“ As, however, the ten per cent on the loan annually contracted is in this manner to be taken from the war-taxes, means must be provided to supply that deficiency, which, if the war continues for a long tract of years, will, from the progressive growth of those burdens on the war taxes, become very considerable. To provide for this deficiency, it is proposed to raise in each year a small supplementary loan, intended to meet the sum abstracted for the charges of the principal loan from the public treasury ; and this supplementary loan is to be borrowed on Mr Pitt’s principle of providing by fresh taxes, laid on in the indirect form, or by the falling in of annuities, for the interest of the debt, and one per cent more to create a fund for its redemption. The loan so required this year will, from the excess of the war taxes above the war expenditure, be only £200,000 ; the annual charges of which on this principle will be only £13,333 : and as

annuities to the amount of £15,000 will fall in this year, it will not be necessary, either for the principal or supplementary loan, to lay on any new taxes at present. Taking an average so as to diffuse the burden created by these supplementary loans as equally as possible over future years, and setting off against them the sums which shall be gained annually by the falling in of annuities, the result is, that it will only be necessary to raise in the seven years immediately subsequent to 1810, £293,000 annually by new taxes ; a sum incredibly small, when it is recollected that we are now in the fifth year of a renewed war, the most costly and momentous in which the country ever was engaged.

“Under the present system, with regard to the public debt, framed upon the acts of 1786, 1792, and 1802, no relief whatever will be experienced from the public burdens till a very distant period, probably from 1834 to 1844 ; and during the later years of the operation of the sinking fund, it will throw such immense sums, not less than forty millions annually, loose upon the country, as cannot fail to produce a most prejudicial effect upon the money market, while the sudden remission of taxes to the amount of £30,000,000 a-year, would produce effects upon artisans, manufacturers, and holders of property of every description, which it is impossible to contemplate without the most serious alarm. In every point of view, therefore, it seems to be highly desirable to render the sinking fund more equal in its progress, by increasing its present power, and diffusing over a greater number of years those extensive effects, which would, according to the present system, be confined to the very last year of its operation. The arrangements prepared with this view are founded on the superior advantage of applying to the redemption of debt a sinking fund of five per cent on the actual money capital, instead of one per cent on the nominal capital or amount of stock. This is to be the system applied to the loans of the first ten years ; and in return for this advantage, it is proposed that when the present sinking fund shall have so far increased as to exceed in its amount the interest of the debt then unredeemed, such surplus shall be at the disposal of parliament. By this means a larger sum will be annually applied to the sinking fund from hencefor-

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37.
Advantages
of the pro-
posed system.

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¹ Parl. Deb.
viii. 566, 594.

38.
Argument
against it by
Lord Castle-
reagh and Mr
Perceval.

ward than could have been obtained under the old system ; the whole loans contracted in future during the war will be redeemed within forty-five years from the date of their creation ; and this without violating any of the provisions of the act 1792, establishing the present sinking fund. Parliament, during the years of its final and greatest operation, will be enabled to administer a very great relief to the public necessities, and obviate all the dangers with which an undue rapidity in the contraction of debt would otherwise be attended.” ¹ *

In opposition to these able arguments, it was urged by Lord Castlereagh, Mr Canning, and Mr Perceval—“ This plan of finance proposes gradually to mortgage for fourteen years the whole of the war taxes for the interest of loans in war—a decided departure from all our former principles, which were to preserve religiously the distinction between war and permanent taxes, and which would, if carried into effect for any considerable time, deprive the nation of almost all the benefit to which it is entitled to look upon the termination of hostilities. The new plan, moreover, will require loans to a greater amount to be raised in each year than would be required if the usual system of borrowing were adhered to. At the end of twenty years it appears, from the calculations laid before parliament, that this excess will amount to the enormous sum of £193,000,000. The whole machinery of the new plan is cumbersome and complicated : the additional charges arising from that circumstance will amount to a very considerable sum. The ways and means intended to prevent the imposition of new taxes in future, viz.—the expired annuities, together with the excess of the sinking fund above the interest of the unredeemed debt, are equally applicable *pro tanto* to mitigate their increase, under any other mode of raising loans that may be decided on ; and their application in this way would be more advantageous than in the other, inasmuch as it is better to avoid contracting debt than to gain relief by a remission of taxation.

* The speech of Lord Henry Petty on this occasion is well worthy of the attention of all who wish to make themselves masters of the British finances during the Revolutionary war. It is the most distinct, luminous, and statesmanlike exposition on the subject which is to be found in the whole range of the parliamentary debates after the death of Mr Pitt.

"It is futile to say that the public necessities compel us to have recourse to the perilous system of mortgaging the war taxes for the interest of future loans. It is here that the great danger of the new system consists: it is in breaking down the old and sacred barrier between the war and peace expenses, that the seeds of inextricable confusion to our finances in future are to be found. It is quite possible, as appears from the authentic calculations before parliament, to obtain the eleven millions a-year required for the deficiency of the war taxes below the war charges, without mortgaging these taxes, without the immense loans required under the new system, and without any material or unbearable addition to the public burdens. The mode in which this great object is to be attained is, by resolving that, when the loan of the year in war does not exceed the amount of the sinking fund in such year, instead of making provision for the interest of such loan in the taxes, the same shall be provided for *out of the interest receivable on the amount of stock redeemed* by the commissioners for the reduction of the national debt in that year. Any excess of national expenditure above the thirty-two millions to be fixed as the average amount of war expenditure, to be provided for in the usual manner. The data laid before parliament prove, that under this plan, in fourteen years of war, one hundred and ten millions less will be borrowed than under that proposed by the chancellor of the exchequer; and though doubtless the sinking fund will be greatly impaired, yet, after making allowance for its restricted operation from the charge of future loans on its amount, the total debt at the expiration of that period will be upwards of forty millions above that now proposed.*

"Great evils both to the stockholders and the country must arise from the adoption of the new plan, in consequence of the enormous and inordinate loans, amounting

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39.

Counter plan
proposed by
them.

* Lord H. Petty's plan—

War loans for 14 years,	£210,000,000
Supplementary loans for do.,	94,200,000
	L.314,200,000
War taxes rendered permanent,	401,231,000
Unredeemed debt in 1820, at end of same time,	9,180,000
New taxes imposed,	2,051,000
New loans in 1820,	32,000,000
Sinking fund in 1820,	17,744,021

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40.

The minis-
terial scheme
as threaten-
ing to break
up the sink-
ing fund.

before the close of the new plan to not less than forty or fifty millions of stock annually, which must be contracted. Such immense loans must tend powerfully to lower the value of the public securities, lead to an extensive and undue increase of the circulating medium, and a rapid depreciation in the value of money, attended with the most prejudicial effects upon many branches of industry, and a general insecurity on the part of the holders of property. Above all, the principle of *placing at the disposal of parliament the excess of the sinking fund above the interest of the debt unredeemed*, is calculated to lead to a much more extensive diversion of that fund from its destined purpose, than the system which Mr Pitt had established; in as much as the latter only proposed to derive aid from the sinking fund during the war, and only to the precise extent of the interest of the sum redeemed within the year, leaving the fund in undiminished extent to operate upon the public debt on the return of peace; whereas the former places the surplus of the sinking fund above the interest of the unredeemed debt, absolutely and unreservedly at the disposal of parliament, in peace as in war, without any other limitation than that a sum equal to the debt subsisting in 1802 shall be redeemed within forty-five years from that period. It is easy to foresee that such a power of *appropriating a large part of the sinking fund* will be too powerful a temptation for the virtue of future governments to resist; and that the practical result will be, that *that noble institution will be irretrievably mutilated*, and the nation lose the whole benefit of the immense sacrifices for the benefit of posterity which it has made during the whole continuance of the present contest. The equivalent proposed to the fundholders of an additional five per cent sinking fund on the war loans, is entirely deceptive;¹ inasmuch as the depreciation of his property which must ensue from the improvident accumulation of loans in the

¹ Parl. Deb.
viii. 1004,
1018.

Lord Castlereagh's plan—

War loans, 11 millions a-year, for 14 years,	.	L.154,000,000
Debt unredeemed at end of 1820,	. . .	358,000,000
War taxes rendered permanent,	. . .	none.
New taxes imposed,	. . .	2,547,000
New loan in 1820,	. . .	11,000,000
Sinking fund in 1820,	. . .	9,180,896

—*Parl. Deb.* viii. 1014.

market, with their necessary concomitant, an extensive and undue paper currency, must much more than compensate any additional value which it might acquire from this augmentation of the means of its liquidation."

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The budget for the year 1807 was based on the new plan of finance; it included a loan of only L.12,000,000, which was contracted on very advantageous terms, and the whole expenditure was calculated on that system of making preparations for a long and protracted struggle, which the disastrous issue of the Prussian war gave too much reason to apprehend awaited the country.¹ *

41.
Budget for
1807.
March 4.
1 Parl. Deb.
viii. 1075.

The debates on Lord Henry Petty's able plan of finance are of little moment at this time, abandoned as his system soon was amidst the necessities and changes of future years; but the views brought forward on both sides were an essential deviation from the great principle of Mr Pitt's financial policy, and presaged the approach of times when the provident policy so long upheld by his unshaken foresight, was to be abandoned with the common consent of both the great parties alternately intrusted with the administration of affairs. Mr Pitt's principle was to provide the interest of each loan annually contracted, and the one per cent destined for the extinction of its principal, by means of indirect taxes which thereafter formed part of the permanent revenue of the country till the debt was extinguished. But both Lord H. Petty and Lord Castle-

42.
Reflections
on this sub-
ject.

* The budget for 1807 was stated by Lord Henry Petty as follows:—

Supply.		Ways and Means.	
Navy, . . .	£16,997,837	Land and malt, . . .	£2,750,000
Army, ordinary, . . .	15,465,311	Surplus of Consolidated Fund, . . .	3,500,000
Extraordinaries arising, . . .	4,333,710	War taxes, . . .	19,800,000
Ordnance, . . .	3,743,715	Lottery, . . .	320,000
Miscellaneous, . . .	1,860,000	Vote of credit, . . .	3,000,000
Vote of credit, . . .	3,000,000	Loan, . . .	12,000,000
		Surplus of 1805, . . .	171,000
			£41,541,000
Interest of exchequer bills, . . .	1,200,000	—See <i>Parl. Deb.</i> viii. 1075.	
Loyalty loan, . . .	350,000		
Deficiency of malt-tax, 1805, . . .	200,000		
For Great Britain and Ireland, . . .	47,150,573		
Deduct 2-17ths for Ireland, . . .	5,545,677		
Expenditure of Great Britain, . . .	£41,604,896		

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reagh seem to have imagined that the time had now arrived when it would be difficult, if not impossible, to raise any increased revenue in this form ; and accordingly the plans of both were characterised by the great and decisive step of providing for the charges of future debt, not by indirect and permanent taxes, but by other means imposing no additional *present* burden on the country, but of course, for that very reason, trenching on its *ultimate* resources. The former proposed to do this by mortgaging the war taxes for the charges of all the debt which might hereafter be contracted, and rendering the amount of those taxes thus mortgaged a permanent part of the peace revenue : the latter, by leaving untouched the war taxes, but appropriating to the interest of future loans part of the present sinking fund, and thereby impairing to a proportionate extent its efficiency on the return of peace. Both implied a deviation from the cardinal point of Mr Pitt's system, the providing for the discharge of the interest of all debts out of *indirect taxes religiously set apart for that purpose*. And it is remarkable, as an example how much the fortunes and destinies of a state are often determined by the character and life of a single master-spirit, that this vast change, fraught, as experience has since proved it to have been, with the ruin of our financial prospects, and probable ultimate subjugation as an independent state, was simultaneously proposed by the leaders of both Whigs and Tories, the moment that great statesman and his illustrious rival were mouldering in their graves.

43.
Prejudicial
effect in the
end of these
discussions.

Had the period arrived when it was totally impossible to provide for the charges of new loans by progressive additions to the peace revenue, this change, however prejudicial, would not have been a matter of regret more than any other unavoidable calamity. But experience has now sufficiently demonstrated, that this was very far indeed from being the case ; for, down to the very end of the war, new taxes were imposed to an extent that, *a priori*, would have been thought impossible. As it was, therefore, the discussions which ensued on the rival finance projects of Lord H. Petty and Lord Castlereagh unnecessarily gave the first rude shock to the firm and provident system of Mr Pitt's finance, by breaking down

the barrier which had hitherto kept the funds destined for the discharge of the debt sacred from the avidity and short-sighted desires of the people, and accustoming them to regard both the revenue set apart for that purpose and the war taxes during peace, as a fund to which they might have recourse to relieve the war pressure of the moment.

Of the two, if it had become necessary to make choice of one or other, the system of Lord Henry Petty was the most manly and statesmanlike with reference to domestic administration: inasmuch as it was not calculated to trench upon the sinking fund, until it had become equal to the loans annually contracted, by which means the increase of the amount of the whole debt, after that period, would have been rendered impossible; and proposed, in the mean time, to pledge the war taxes for the interest and charges of the sums borrowed. Whereas that of Lord Castlereagh proposed at once to lay violent hands upon the sinking fund for the charges of all future loans, and yet give the nation the full benefit of the remission of all the war taxes on the return of peace. The former system, however, though well adapted to a state of uniform and long-continued hostility, was totally unsuitable to the varying circumstances and fleeting changes which were likely to ensue in the course of the contest in which the nation was actually engaged; and by encouraging a morbid sensitiveness to any extraordinary advances at a particular time, beyond what the general system warranted, was too likely to occasion the loss of the fairest opportunities of bringing it to a successful issue. Of this unhappy tendency the issue of the war in Poland, starved out, as we shall presently see it was, by an ill-judged economy on the part of Great Britain, afforded a memorable example. And in the habit acquired by the nation in these discussions to regard the sinking fund, not as a sacred deposit set apart, like the life insurance of an individual, for the benefit of posterity, but *as a resource which might be instantly rendered available for present necessities*, is to be found the remote cause of the great change of 1813 in our financial policy, and the total departure from any regular system for the redemption of the public debt—

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44.

Lord Henry Petty's plan was the preferable of the two.

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45.
General character of the Whig measures at this period. Their combined humanity and wisdom.

a change which is perhaps to be regarded as the greatest evil entailed upon the nation by the monied embarrassments and democratic ascendancy of later times.

Long as the preceding summary of the principal domestic measures of the Whig administration has been, it will not in all probability be regretted by the reflecting reader. It is not as the record of mere events, but of thoughts and the progress of opinion, that history is valuable; and, independent of the importance of the changes which have been discussed upon the future history of the empire, they are in an especial manner worthy of attention, as embodying the principal domestic designs of the great party which, after so long a seclusion from office, at that period held the reins of power; and which, besides the acknowledged ability of its leaders, embraced a large portion of the thought and learning of the state. And upon an attentive consideration of these measures, it must be obvious to the candid reader that they were founded on just principles, and directed to important ends; that humanity and benevolence breathed in their spirit, and wisdom and foresight regulated their execution. Above all, they were characterised, equally with the measures of Mr Pitt, by that regard for the future, and resolution to submit to present evils for the sake of ultimate advantage, which is the mainspring of all that is really great or good, both in individuals and nations. On comparing the statesmanlike measures of the Whigs at that period in England, with the frantic innovations which tore society in pieces in France at the commencement of their Revolution, or which have been urged by the Chartists and Socialists in later times in Great Britain, the difference appears prodigious, and is highly deserving of attention. Thence may be learned both the important tendency of free institutions to modify those ardent aspirations after equality which, when generally diffused, are, of all other political passions, the most fatal to the cause of freedom, and the wide difference between the chastened efforts of a liberal spirit, when guided by aristocratic power, and modifying not governing the measures of government, and the wild excesses or atrocious crimes, destructive at once to present and future

generations, which spring from the surrender of the actual direction of affairs to the immediate control or the passions of the people.

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It remains to detail, with a very different measure of encomium, the principal foreign transactions of the Whig administration, from the period when the Prussian war commenced on the continent of Europe.

It has been already mentioned how Sir Home Popham, without authority from the British government, proceeded from the Cape of Good Hope to Buenos Ayres with a small military force, and the disastrous issue of that expedition.¹ But the general transports of joy at the brilliant prospects which this acquisition was supposed to open to British commerce, were so excessive, that government, while they very properly brought Sir Home to a court-martial for his unauthorised proceeding, which, in March 1807, reprimanded him for his conduct, had not firmness enough to withstand the general wish that an expedition should be sent to the river La Plata, to wipe away the disgrace which had there been incurred by the British arms, and annex such lucrative dependencies to the British crown. No sooner, accordingly, had it become evident, from the failure of the negotiations for peace at Paris, that a protracted struggle was to be apprehended, than a reinforcement of three thousand men was sent to the British troops in that quarter, under the command of Sir Samuel Auchmuty. On arriving at the Rio de la Plata, he found the remnant of the English force cooped up in Maldonado, with hardly any provisions, and daily exposed to the insults of the accomplished horsemen of that country. Deeming that town unfit for being rendered a dépôt and place of security for the army, Sir Samuel resolved to direct his forces against Monte Video—a fortified seaport, admirably calculated for all these purposes. After great difficulties, the troops were transported to that neighbourhood; but on commencing the siege, great and apparently insurmountable difficulties were encountered. The defences of the place were found to be much stronger than had been expected; the whole powder in the fleet was almost blown away in the first five days' firing; intrenching tools were wanting to make the breaches; and four thousand regular troops, with

46.
Foreign transactions.
Fresh expedition to South America, and capture of Monte Video.
¹ Ante, chap. xlii. §§ 48–51.

March 7.

Oct. 1806.

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1807.

Feb. 2.

¹ Ann. Reg.
1807, 213,
214. See Sir
S. Auch-
muty's Des-
patch, 652.

47.

A second
expedition
against
Buenos Ayres
is resolved on.

June 2.

twenty pieces of cannon, a force fully equal to that of the besiegers, were rapidly approaching to raise the siege. In these critical circumstances he resolved to hazard an assault, though the breach could as yet scarcely be called practicable; and orders were issued for the attack an hour before daybreak. Owing to the darkness of the night the head of the column missed the breach, and remained under the ramparts for twenty minutes exposed to a heavy fire, every shot of which told in their dense ranks. As the day dawned, however, it was discovered by Captain Renny, of the 40th regiment, who fell gloriously as he mounted it; the troops, emulating his bright example, rushed in with irresistible violence, cleared the streets of all the cannon which had been placed to enfilade them, and made prisoners of all the enemy who attempted any resistance. In this glorious storm, the loss of the British was about six hundred, but twice that number of the enemy fell, and two thousand were made prisoners, besides a thousand who escaped in boats, so that the numbers of the garrison at first had been greater than that of the besieging force.¹

It would have been well for the British arms, if their attempts on South America had terminated here; but the discomfiture of Sir Home Popham's expedition to the Rio de la Plata, unhappily led both the government and the nation to conceive, that the honour of the British arms was implicated in regaining the ground they had lost in that quarter. With this view an additional expedition, under the command of General Craufurd, consisting of four thousand two hundred men, which had been sent out in the end of October 1806, destined originally to effect the conquest of Chili, on the other side of Cape Horn, was, when news arrived of the expulsion of the English from Buenos Ayres, ordered to stop short, and attempt the reconquest of that important city. General Craufurd, agreeably to these orders, made sail for the Rio de la Plata, and effected a junction with Sir Samuel Auchmuty at Monte Video in the beginning of June. As the united force now amounted to above nine thousand men, it was deemed advisable to make an immediate attempt on Buenos Ayres; and, in pursuance of express directions from government, the command of the

force for this purpose was given to General Whitelocke.* That officer arrived at Monte Video on the 9th May, and preparations were immediately made for the proposed enterprise.

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The force which set out on this expedition consisted of seven thousand eight hundred effective men, with eighteen pieces of field artillery. After several fatiguing marches, the whole reached Reduction, a village about nine miles from Buenos Ayres, and having manœuvred so as to deceive the enemy as to the real point of passage, succeeded in crossing the river, with very little loss, at the ford of Passo Chico. The army having been assembled on the right bank, orders were given for a general attack on the town. Great preparations for defence had been made by the inhabitants; above two hundred pieces of cannon were disposed, in advantageous situations, in the principal streets, and fifteen thousand armed men were stationed on the flat roofs of the houses, to pour their destructive volleys on the columns who might advance to the attack. The measures of the English general, so far from being calculated to meet this danger, the magnitude of which is well known to all experienced military men, betrayed a fatal and overweening contempt for his opponents. The different columns of attack were directed to advance by the principal streets to the great square near the river Plata; but by an inconceivable oversight, they were not allowed to load their pieces, and no firing was permitted till they had reached the final place of their destination. The consequence was, that those brave men were exposed, as they advanced through the long streets leading to the great square, without the possibility of returning it, to a destructive shower of musketry, hand-grenades, and stones from the tops of the houses, all of which were flat and covered with an armed and enthusiastic population; while strong barricades were drawn at intervals across the streets, mounted by a plentiful array of heavy artillery.¹

48.
Preparations
for its
defence.

¹ Ann. Reg.
1807, 219,
221.

* "As it has been thought advisable," said Mr Windham in his official orders, "that an officer of high rank, as well as talent and judgment, should be sent to take the command of his Majesty's forces in South America, it was his Majesty's pleasure to make choice for that purpose of General Whitelocke."—*Mr Windham's Instructions to General Whitelocke, 5th March 1807; Ann. Reg. 1807, 216.*

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49.
Failure of the
attack.
July 5.

Notwithstanding all these obstacles, however, the formidable nature of which was so fatally experienced by the royal guard of Charles X. in the streets of Paris in 1830, Sir Samuel Auchmuty, by a vigorous attack on the right, made himself master of the Plaza de Toros, took eighty-two pieces of cannon, an immense quantity of ammunition, and six hundred prisoners. General Whitelocke himself had gained possession of an advanced post in the centre, and the Recedencia, a commanding station on the left, had also fallen into the hands of the British. But these advantages were dearly purchased; and in other quarters, the plunging fire to which the troops were exposed, without the possibility of returning it, had proved so destructive, that three regiments had been compelled to lay down their arms, and the attacking force was weakened by the loss of twenty-five hundred men. On the following morning the Spanish general, Linières, offered to restore all the prisoners who had been taken, on condition that the British forces should withdraw altogether from Monte Video, and all the settlements which they held on the Rio de la Plata. Such was the consternation produced by the disasters of the preceding day, and such the difficulties with which the further prosecution of the enterprise appeared to be attended, that, notwithstanding the brilliant success of Sir Samuel Auchmuty, and the capture of so large a portion of the enemy's artillery, these terms were agreed to, and a capitulation, in virtue of which the whole British troops were withdrawn from the river Plata, was signed on the following day.¹

July 7.
¹ Ann. Reg.
1807, 219,
221.50.
Court-martial
on General
Whitelocke,
who is
cashiered.

The public indignation knew no bounds when the calamitous issue of this expedition was made known in Great Britain; and the outcry was the more vehement, from the glorious success at Monte Video having inspired the people with an unreasonably low opinion of the South American forces. So violent was the clamour, that government, in order to appease it, were compelled to bring General Whitelocke to trial; and the court-martial which investigated the charges brought against him, in January 1809, sentenced him to be cashiered and dismissed from his majesty's service. No opinion, however, can be formed of the real merits of the case from this

decision, whatever may have been the respectability of the officers composing it; for such was the happy ignorance which then generally prevailed in Great Britain on military subjects, that the members of the court-martial required to be told what the right bank of a river, in military language, means;¹ and such is frequently the vehemence and unreasonableness of the public mind in England on such occasions, that the strength of scarcely any intellect is equal to withstanding the torrent. The examples of Saragossa, Gerona, and Paris also, have, since that time, abundantly demonstrated that the resistance of an insurgent population in barricaded streets and on the roofs of stone houses, is often extremely formidable, even to powerful bodies of disciplined troops.

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¹ South. Pen.
War, i. 73.

But on a calm retrospect of the transactions, at this distance of time, it cannot be denied that an energetic and skilful general might, in all probability, have extricated the British army, if not with honour, at least without disgrace, from this ill-concerted enterprise. The order to traverse the streets with muskets unloaded, after a desperate resistance was prepared and foreseen, though expressly approved of by the court-martial, seems hardly reconcilable to any rule of military policy or common sense; and above all, the omission to take advantage of the great success of Sir Samuel Auchmuty, and the powerful train of artillery which he had captured, if not to achieve success, at least to avert dishonour, must justly be considered as a matter of reproach to the British general. Much allowance must, however, be made for the critical situation of an inexperienced officer, plunged, in his first essay in a separate command, in difficulties under which the intellects of Marmont and Lefebvre subsequently reeled. But the same excuse cannot be made for the government, which selected an officer unknown to fame for so important a service, when many others had proved their capacity even in the comparatively inconsiderable military operations in which England had hitherto been engaged.²* But this weight of secret parliamentary influence is the inherent bane of a

51.
Reflections
on this event.

² Ann. Reg.
1807, 219,
224. Dum.
xv. 82, 83.

* The appointment of General Whitelocke over the head of Sir Samuel Auchmuty, the hero of Monte Video, appears the strongest confirmation of these remarks, but in reality it is not so; for that town was stormed on Feb. 2, and

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free constitution ; it appeared afterwards, on a still greater scale, on occasion of the Walcheren expedition, and continued to paralyse all the military operations of England, till the commanding genius of Wellington burst through the trammels, and fixed the flickering light of its glory in a star of unquenchable lustre.

52.
Capture of
Curaçoa, and
establishment
of the Re-
public of
Hayti.

In other colonial transactions, the British arms during this administration were more prosperous. Curaçoa, early in the year, was taken, with hardly any resistance, by a squadron of frigates under the command of Captain Brisbane ; the advantages of sharing in British commerce, and obtaining the protection of the British flag, having now disposed the planters, in all the colonial possessions of other states, to range themselves under its banners. Soon after, a regular constitution was proclaimed in Hayti, by which slavery was for ever abolished ; property and persons placed under the safeguard of the law ; the first magistrate of the republic declared the generalissimo of its forces by sea and land ; and a code established, breathing a spirit of wisdom, philanthropy, and moderation. The establishment of such a republican government, coming so soon after the heroic resistance which the negroes had opposed to the attempt at their subjugation by Napoleon, would have been a subject of the highest interest, and deserving of the warmest sympathy of every friend to humanity, were it not that experience has since abundantly proved, what historical information might even then have too clearly led the well-informed to anticipate, that all such attempts at the regeneration of mankind by sudden changes, are not only delusive, but pernicious ; that to give to savages the liberty and institutions of civilisation, is to consign them to immediate suffering and ultimate slavery ; and that every attempt to transfer at once into one age or nation the institutions of another, is as hopeless a task as to expect in the nursery seedling the strength and solidity of the aged oak, or in the buoyancy and irreflection of childhood the steadiness and perseverance of maturer years.

General Whitelocke's appointment is dated March 5, in the same year ; so that the one was not known when the other took place. It is the overlooking the many officers who had distinguished themselves in Egypt, India, and at Maida, which forms the real reproach to the British government on this occasion.

This untoward expedition to the shores of the La Plata was not the only one which brought disgrace upon the arms of England at this period—enterprises equally unfortunate took place both on the shores of the Bosphorus and the banks of the Nile. It has been already mentioned,¹ that Russia had unhappily selected the moment when the Prussian war, if not actually commenced, was at least obviously approaching, to invade the provinces of Wallachia and Moldavia by the army of General Michelson, and we have noticed the disastrous effect which that distraction of force had upon the issue of the contest on the Vistula. This irruption, however ill-timed or imprudent, when so serious a war nearer home awaited the Russian forces, was not, however, unjustifiable; on the contrary, it was provoked by the ambition of the French government, and the intrigues of their ambassador at Constantinople, which, by precipitating the Divan into a breach of the existing treaty with the court of Russia, gave to that power too plausible a ground for resuming its long-cherished schemes of ambition on the banks of the Danube.

By the treaty of Jassy, which terminated the bloody and disastrous war which the Turks had long waged with the might of Muscovy and the genius of Suwarroff, it had been covenanted that the hospodars, or governors of Wallachia and Moldavia, should not be dismissed from their high functions for the space of seven years; and, by the supplementary treaty of 24th September 1802, it had been expressly stipulated, in addition, that they should not be removed without the consent of Russia.² No sooner, however, had it become evident to Napoleon that a war was impending with Prussia and Russia, than he despatched a firm and skilful ambassador to Constantinople, with instructions to do every thing in his power to produce a rupture between the Turks and Russians, and in this manner effect a powerful diversion to the Muscovite forces on the banks of the Danube. This diplomatic agent was General Sebastiani, a military officer of great experience, and whose subtile and penetrating genius, formerly nourished in a cloister,³ and since matured amid the experience of camps, was admirably adapted for the mingled acuteness and resolution required in the

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53.

State of
affairs in
Turkey.¹ Ante, chap.
xliv. § 4.

54.

Cause of
rupture be-
tween Tur-
key and
Russia.

Jan. 9, 1792.

² Martens, v.
291. Ann.
Reg. 1806,
208.³ Bign. vi.
177, 178.Dum. xvii.
257, 259.

Hard. ix. 366.

Ann. Reg.
1807, 193,
195.

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mission with which he was now intrusted. His secret instructions were, in the first instance, to endeavour to procure the dismissal of the Princes Ipsilanti and Morusi from the government of these provinces, who were in the interest of Russia, and place in their stead princes of the rival families of Suzzo and Callimachi, who it was known would incline to the French alliance.

55.
Dismissal of
the Wai-
wodes of
Wallachia
and Moldavia
by Sultaun
Selim.
¹ See infra,
chap. lxix.

When Sebastiani arrived at the Turkish capital, in August 1806, he found matters in a situation extremely favourable to the attainment of these objects. The Sultaun, in his attempts to introduce the European tactics and discipline into his armies, of the need of which the recent wars with Russia had afforded repeated and fatal experience, and of which a detailed account will be given in a future chapter,¹ had become embarrassed with very serious difficulties. He found himself obstinately resisted not only by the proud and disorderly bands of the Janizaries, but by that powerful party in all the Ottoman provinces who were attached to their national and religious institutions, and regarded the introduction of European customs, whether into the army or the state, as the first step to national ruin. In this extremity he gladly embraced the proffered council and assistance of the French ambassador, who represented a power which naturally connected itself with the innovating party in every other state, and whose powerful armaments, already stationed in Dalmatia, promised the only effectual aid which could be looked for from the European nations against the Turkish malcontents, whom it was well known Russia was disposed to support. The difficulty arising from the necessity, in terms of the treaty, of consulting Russia in regard to the removal of the obnoxious hospodars, was strongly felt; but the art of Sebastiani prevailed over every difficulty. At a private conference with the Sultaun in person, he succeeded in persuading that unsuspecting sovereign that the clause in the convention of 1802 applied only to the removal of the waiwodes on the ground of maladministration in their respective provinces, but could not extend to a case where it was called for by the general interests of the empire: that the present was an instance of the latter description, from the notorious intrigues of those princes with the hereditary enemies of the Ottoman faith;² and, in pursuance

Aug. 30,
1806.

² Dum. xvii.
257, 264.

Bign. vi. 177,
179. Hard.

ix. 364, 365.

of these representations, a hatti-scheriff appeared on the 30th August, dismissing the reigning waiwodes, and appointing Princes Suzzo and Callimachi in their room.

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This decisive step was taken by the Sublime Porte not only without the concurrence of Russia, but without the knowledge of any members of the diplomatic body at Constantinople ; and as its immediate effect in producing a rupture between the Divan and the court of St Petersburg was distinctly foreseen, the effect produced by its promulgation was very great. The Russian ambassador, M. Italinski, loudly complained of the infraction of the treaty, in which he was powerfully supported by Mr Arbuthnot, the minister of Great Britain, who openly threatened an immediate attack on the Turkish capital from the fleets of their respective sovereigns. Sebastiani, however, skilfully availed himself of the advantages which the course of events gave him, to secure and increase the French influence with the Divan. No sooner, therefore, did intelligence arrive of the refusal of the Russian government to ratify the treaty concluded by D'Oubril at Paris, than he renewed his efforts, and, representing the cause of France as now identified with that of the Sublime Porte, loudly demanded that the Bosphorus should be closed to Russian vessels of war or transports, and announced that any continuation or renewal of alliance with England or Russia, would be considered as a declaration of war against the French Emperor.¹ These remonstrances proved successful ; and a few days afterwards a Russian brig, which presented itself at the mouth of the Bosphorus, was denied admission. These measures irritated so violently the Russian ambassador, that he embarked on board the English frigate Canopus, and threatened instantly to leave the harbour, if the dismissed waiwodes were not forthwith reinstated in their possessions. In these efforts he was powerfully seconded by Mr Wellesley Pole, who, in the absence of Mr Arbuthnot, detained by fever at Bujuchdere, presented himself before the Divan in his riding-dress, with a whip in his hand, and peremptorily announced, that if the demands of Russia were not instantly acceded to, a British fleet would enter the Dardanelles and lay the capital in ashes. Intimidated by this bold

56.
Violent remonstrances of Russia and England, which produce a repeal of the measure.

¹ Note of 16th Sept. 1806.

Sept. 21.

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1807.

¹ Ann. Reg.
1806, 208,
209. Bign. vi.
182, 184.
Hard. ix. 364,
365.

57.
Meanwhile
the Russian
armies invade
the principalities.

Nov. 23,
1806.

² Hard. ix.
364. Bign. vi.
184.

language, as well as the haughty air of the person who used it, and secretly aware of the weakness of the defences of the capital on that side, the counsellors of Selim recommended a temporary concession to the demands of the allied powers; the waiwodes were reinstated in their governments, and ample promises made to the Russian ambassador of satisfaction for all his demands. But these conciliatory measures were only intended to gain time; and in a secret conference with Sebastiani, the Sultaun informed that minister that he had only yielded to the storm till he was in a condition to brave it, and that his policy, as well as his inclinations, inseparably united him with the Emperor Napoleon.¹

Matters were now, to all appearance, accommodated between the Divan and the cabinet of St Petersburg; but the great distance between the two capitals brought on a rupture when all causes of irritation had ceased, at the point where their interests came into collision. As soon as intelligence of the dismissal of the waiwodes reached the Russian cabinet, they despatched orders to General Michelson, whenever his preparations were completed, to enter the Turkish territory; and when intelligence was received of their being reinstated on the 15th October, which did not arrive at the Russian capital till the beginning of November, it was too late to prevent the fulfilment of the previous orders and the commencement of hostilities. Michelson accordingly entered Moldavia on the 23d November, and having once drawn the sword, the cabinet of St Petersburg had not sufficient confidence in the sincerity of this forced submission on the part of the Sublime Porte, to restore it to its sheath; or possibly they were not sorry of an opportunity of extending themselves towards the Danube, and advancing their permanent schemes of conquest towards Constantinople. Notwithstanding the restoration of the hospodars, therefore, their armies continued to advance, driving the Turks before them, to the no small confusion of M. Italinski, who had uniformly declared, both in public and private, that, as soon as that event was known at St Petersburg, their march would be countermanded.²

Sebastiani, meanwhile, made the best use of this now unjustifiable invasion, as well as of the consternation produced by the victories of Napoleon in Prussia, to increase the French influence at the Divan. He strongly represented that this was the time, when Russia was already hard pressed by the victorious arms of the French Emperor on the Vistula, to throw their weight into the scale, and regain, in a single successful campaign, the influence and possessions which had been wrested from them by their inveterate enemies during more than a century of previous misfortunes. Persuaded by such plausible arguments, and irritated at the continued stay of the Russian troops in the principalities, after the causes which had justified their entrance into them had ceased, the hesitation of the Divan was at length overcome, and war was formally declared against Russia in the end of the year. To protect the Muscovite ambassador from the fury of the Mussulmans, which was now fully aroused, the Sultaun stationed a guard of janizaries over his palace. Mr Arbuthnot strongly remonstrated against his being sent, according to previous custom, to the Seven Towers. General Sebastiani had the generosity to employ his powerful influence for the same purpose; and, by their united influence, this barbarous practice was discontinued, and M. Italski was permitted to embark on board the English frigate *Canopus*, by which he was soon after conveyed into Italy. Less humane, however, towards his own satraps than the ambassadors of his enemies, the Sultaun despatched his messengers with the bowstring to Prince Ipsilanti; but that nobleman, in whom energy of mind supplied the want of bodily strength, succeeded in throwing down the executioners after they had got hold of his person, and had the good fortune to escape into Russia.¹

Though war was thus resolved on, the Porte was far from being in a condition at the moment to oppose any effectual resistance to the powerful army of General Michelson, which had entered the principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia. Forty thousand Russian troops, amply provided with every necessary, were irresistible. Moldavia was speedily overrun; the victorious bands, following up their success, entered Wallachia; a tumult-

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XLV.

1807.

58.

And war is
declared.

Dec. 30, 1806.

¹ Hard. ix.
365. Bign. vi.
184, 189.
Ann. Reg.
1806, 208,
211.

59.

Rapid progress of the
Russians in
the principalities.

CHAP.
XLV.

1807.

Dec. 27.

¹ Ann. Reg.
1806, 211.

60.

The Russians
require the
aid of a naval
attack by
England on
Constanti-
nople,
which is
agreed to.² Ante,
chap. xliv. §.
81.

tuary force which the Pasha of Roudchouck had raised to arrest their progress was defeated ; and Bucharest, the capital of the latter province, and a city containing eighty thousand inhabitants, fell into their hands. Before the end of the year, and before war had been formally declared on either side, they were already masters of all the territory to the north of the Danube ; and their outposts, preparing to cross that river, were in communication with Czerni George, the chief of Servia, who had revolted from the Grand Seignior, defeated his forces in several encounters, and was at this time engaged in the siege of the important fortress of Belgrade.¹

The rapidity and magnitude of these successes, however, was the occasion of no small disquietude to the court of St Petersburg. They had now felt the weight of the French troops on the Vistula ; their arms had retired from doubtful and well-debated fields at Golymin and Pultusk ; and they had become sensible of the imprudence of engaging at the same time in another contest, and dispersing the troops so imperiously required for the defence of their own frontier on the banks of the Danube. Already an order had been despatched to recall four divisions to support the extreme left of the army in Poland, whose arrival and operations under Essen, against Bernadotte at Ostrolenka, have already been noticed.² But this was not sufficient ; their diminished forces on the Danube might be exposed to serious danger from the efforts, and now fully aroused national spirit, of the Turks ; and as the duration of the contest with France could not be foreseen, it was of the utmost moment to deprive the Emperor Napoleon of that powerful co-operation which he was likely to derive from the war so imprudently lighted up on the southern frontier of the empire. The naval forces of England appeared to be precisely calculated to effect this object ; and as they were cruising at no great distance in the Ægean Sea, it was hoped that a vigorous demonstration against Constantinople might at once terminate the contest in that quarter. Application was made to the British government for this purpose ; and the cabinet of St James's, however unwilling, under the direction of Mr Fox's successors, to engage

in any military enterprises in conjunction with the continental powers, was not averse to the employment of its naval forces in support of the common cause. They felt the necessity of doing something, after the refusal of both subsidies and land forces to Russia, to convince that power of the sincerity of its desire, with its appropriate weapons, to maintain the contest. Instructions, therefore, were given to Sir John Duckworth, who, at the close of the year, was cruising off Ferrol with four ships of the line, to proceed forthwith to the mouth of the Dardanelles, where Admiral Louis was already stationed with three line-of-battle ships and four frigates; and his orders were to force the passage of these celebrated Straits, and compel the Turks, by the threat of an immediate bombardment, into a relinquishment of the French and adoption of the Russian and English alliance.¹

The Hellespont, which, from the days of Homer and the war of Troy to these times, has been the theatre of the most important operations in which the fate of Europe and Asia were concerned, is formed by the narrow strait through which the waters of the Black Sea discharge themselves from the lesser expanse of Marmora into the Mediterranean. Its breadth varies from one to three miles: but its course, which is very winding, amounts to nearly thirty; and the many projecting headlands which advance into the stream, afford the most favourable stations for the erection of batteries. Its banks are less precipitous and beautiful than those of the Bosphorus, which is the appellation bestowed on the still more bold and romantic channel which unites the Sea of Marmora to the Euxine: but they possess, both from historical association and natural variety, the highest interest; and few persons who have received even the rudiments of education can thread their devious way through the winding channel and smiling steep, which resemble the shores of an inland lake rather than the boundary of two hemispheres, without recurring in imagination to the exploits of Ajax and Achilles, whose tombs still stand at the entrance of the Strait, the loves of Hero and Leander, yet fresh in the songs of the boatmen, the memorable contests of which it was the theatre during the Byzantine empire, the glowing picture by Gibbon of the Latin

CHAP.
XLV.

1807.

¹ Bign. vi.
189, 190.
Jom. ii. 372.
Ann. Reg.
1807, 195.

61.
Description
of the Dar-
danelles.

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XLV.

1807.

Crusade, the inimitable pictures by Lamartine of its romantic scenes, and the thrilling verses of Lord Byron on its classic shores.

62.
Ultimatum
of Great
Britain, and
declaration of
war by Tur-
key.

Jan. 26.

Jan. 29.
1 Bign. vi.
191, 192.
Dum. xvii.
271, 273.
Ann. Reg.
1807, 195.

The fortifications of these important straits, the real gates of Constantinople, had been allowed to fall into disrepair. The castles of Europe and Asia, indeed, still stood in frowning majesty to assert the dominion of the Crescent at the narrowest part of the passage; but their ramparts were antiquated, their guns in part dismounted, and such as remained, though of enormous calibre, little calculated to answer the rapidity and precision of an English broadside. The efforts of Sebastiani, seconded by the spirit of the Turks, whose religious enthusiasm was now fully awakened, had endeavoured in vain to attract the attention of the Divan to the danger which threatened them in this quarter. True to the Mussulman principle of foreseeing nothing and judging only of the future by the past, they bent their whole attention to the war on the Danube, and despatched all their disposable forces to arrest the progress of the Servians and Czerni George, when a redoubtable enemy threatened them with destruction at the mouth of the Dardanelles. Duly informed of these circumstances, Mr Arbuthnot was no sooner apprised of the arrival of Sir John Duckworth off Tenedos, than he delivered the ultimatum of Great Britain, which was the immediate dismissal of M. Sebastiani, the accession of Turkey to the alliance of Russia and Great Britain, and the opening of the Dardanelles to the vessels of Russia. These offers were peremptorily declined, and their refusal accompanied by a significant hint from General Sebastiani, that the Berlin decree, recently received at the Turkish capital, required the immediate arrest of all British subjects in all the territories of the allies of France, and that *Turkey was one of these allies*. Deeming his stay at Constantinople no longer secure, Mr Arbuthnot, under colour of going to dine with Admiral Louis, who in the *Endymion* frigate lay off Seraglio Point, withdrew from Constantinople, having first recommended his family to the care of General Sebastiani.¹ That general honourably discharged the trust, but he was too skilful not to turn to the best advantage so unlooked-for an occurrence in his

favour, and war was immediately declared by the Divan against Great Britain.

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XLV.

1807.

63.

Sir John
Duckworth
resolves to
pass the
Dardanelles.

Hitherto every thing had seconded beyond his most sanguine expectations the efforts of the French ambassador, but he was unable to persuade the Turkish government to take the requisite measures of precaution against this new enemy who had arisen. In vain he urged them instantly to put in repair the fortifications of the Dardanelles; in vain he predicted an immediate formidable attack from the fleet of England: nothing was done to give additional security to the Strait, and the Divan, persuaded that the only serious danger lay on the side of the Danube, continued to send all their disposable troops in that direction. Meanwhile the squadrons of Sir John Duckworth and Admiral Louis having effected a junction off Tenedos, their united forces amounted to eight ships of the line, two frigates, and two bomb-vessels; but the *Ajax* of seventy-four guns having unfortunately been destroyed by fire at this critical time, the squadron was reduced to seven line-of-battle ships. With these, however, the British admiral resolved to force the passage. Having taken his measures with much skill, he advanced with his ships in single file at moderate intervals, and with a fair wind, on the morning of the 19th February, entered the Straits.¹

Feb. 19.
¹ Dum. xvii.
275, 277.
Bign. vi. 194.
Jom. ii. 374.
Ann. Reg.
1807, 196.

So completely were the Turks taken by surprise, that a feeble desultory fire alone was opened upon the ships as they passed the first batteries, to which the English did not deign to reply. But when they reached the castles of Europe and Asia, where the Straits are little more than a mile broad, a tremendous cannonade assailed them on both sides, and enormous balls, weighing seven and eight hundredweight, began to pass through the rigging. The British sailors, however, meanwhile were not idle; deliberately aiming their guns, as the ships slowly and majestically moved through the narrow channel, they kept up an incessant discharge to the right and left, with such effect, that the Turkish cannoniers, little accustomed to the rapid fire and accurate aim of modern times, and terrified at the crash of the shot on the battlements around them, took to flight. Following up his triumphant course, the English admiral attacked and burnt the

64.

The Straits
are forced
after much
resistance.

CHAP.
XLV.
1807.

¹ Ann. Reg.
1807, 196.
Dum. xvii.
275, 278.
Bign. vi. 194,
195. Jom. ii.
374.

65.
The Divan
resolves on
submission as
Constanti-
nople was
defenceless.

² Ann. Reg.
1807, 196,
197. Dum.
xvii. 278, 279.
Bign. vi. 197,
198.

line-of-battle ship bearing the flag of the Capitan Pasha lying at anchor in the Straits; Sir Sidney Smith, the second in command, compelled four frigates to surrender, which were immediately after committed to the flames; a fifth, after an obstinate resistance, shared the same fate; and a brig, which with difficulty escaped from the conflagration, had scarcely announced the alarming tidings at Constantinople, when the British fleet, with all sails set, was seen proudly advancing, and cast anchor off the Isle of Princes, within three leagues of Seraglio Point.¹

No words can adequately paint the terror which prevailed in Constantinople, when the increasing sound of the approaching cannonade too surely announced that the defences of the Straits had been forced; and shortly after, the distant light of the conflagration gave token of the rapid destruction of the fleet. This was much increased when a message was received from Admiral Duckworth, half an hour after his arrival, which, after recapitulating all the instances of fidelity to the Turkish alliance which England had so long afforded, concluded by the declaration that if, in twenty-four hours, the demands of Great Britain were not acceded to, he would be reduced to the painful necessity of commencing hostilities. The capital was totally defenceless, not ten guns were mounted on the sea batteries; and a furious crowd was already assembled in the streets, demanding the heads of the Reis Effendi and General Sebastiani, the authors of all the public calamities. The consternation was universal; the danger, from having been never anticipated, was now felt with stunning force; and the Divan having been assembled in the first moments of alarm, sent an intimation to General Sebastiani that no defence remained to the capital; that submission was a matter of necessity, and that, as the people regarded him as the author of all their misfortunes, his life was no longer in safety, and he would do well instantly to leave the capital.²*

But his answer was worthy of the great and gallant

* I have been informed by Sir Stratford Canning, the well-known and able British diplomatist at Constantinople, that a tradition prevails in the East, that Sebastiani was at first disposed to submit, and that it was the Spanish ambassador's remonstrances which awakened him to the energetic conduct which has shed such a lustre around his name.

nation which he represented. Receiving the messenger of the Sultaun in full dress, surrounded by all his suite, he immediately replied—"My personal danger cannot for an instant occupy my attention, when the maintenance of the French alliance and the independence of the Ottoman empire are at stake. I will not quit Constantinople, and I confidently expect a new decision more worthy of Sultaun Selim and the Turkish nation. Tell your powerful monarch, that he should not for a moment think of descending from the high rank where the glorious deeds of his ancestors have placed him, by surrendering to a few English vessels a city containing nine hundred thousand souls, and abundantly provided with magazines and ammunition. Your ramparts are not yet armed, but that may soon be done: you have weapons enough; use them with courage, and victory is secure. The cannon of the English fleet may set fire to a part of the town—granted; but without the assistance of a land army, it could not take possession of the capital, even if you were to open your gates. You sustain every year the ravages of accidental conflagration, and the more serious calamities of the plague, and do you now scruple at incurring the risk of inferior losses in defence of your capital, your country, your holy religion?"¹

This noble reply produced a great effect upon the Divan; and it was resolved, that before submitting they should at least try whether, by gaining time in parleying, they could not in some degree complete their preparations. Sebastiani accordingly dictated a note in answer to the communication from the English admiral, in which the Sultaun professed an anxious desire to re-establish amicable relations with the British government, and announced his appointment of Allett-Effendi for the purpose of conducting the negotiation. The unsuspecting English admiral, who, from the illness of Mr Arbuthnot, was intrusted with the negotiation, was no match for the wily French general in the arts of diplomacy, and fell into the snare. The British ultimatum was sent ashore the following morning, which consisted in the provisional cession of their fleet to England, the dismissal of Sebastiani, and the re-establishment of amicable relations with Russia and the British government. Half an hour only

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66.
Intrepid conduct of Sebastiani.¹ Dum. xvii.
278, 280.
Bign. vi. 197,
198. Ann.
Reg. 1807,
196, 197.67.
The Turks negotiate to gain time, and complete their preparations.

Feb. 21.

CHAP.
XLV.

1807.

¹ Ann. Reg.
1807, 198,
199. Dum.
xvii. 280, 282.
Bign. vi. 198,
200.

was allowed to the Divan, after the receipt and translation of this note, to deliberate and reply. Had this vigorous resolution been acted upon, it must have led to immediate submission: for the batteries were not yet armed; the fleet, the arsenal, the seraglio, and great part of the town, lay exposed to the fire of the English squadron, and during the terror produced by a bombardment, the greater part of the capital, which is chiefly built of wood, must have been reduced to ashes.¹

68.
Vast energy
displayed by
the Mussul-
mans in their
defence.

Unfortunately, instead of doing this, Sir John Duckworth, possessed with the belief that the Sultaun was sincerely desirous of an accommodation, and that the desired objects might be obtained without the horrors of a conflagration, or an irreparable breach with the Ottoman empire, imprudently gave time, and suffered himself to be drawn into a negotiation. Day after day elapsed in the mere exchange of notes and diplomatic communications; and meanwhile the spirit of the Mussulmans, now raised to the highest pitch, was indefatigably employed in organising the means of defence. The direction of the whole was intrusted to General Sebastiani, for whom a magnificent tent was erected in the gardens of the Seraglio, and who communicated to the ardent multitude the organisation and arrangement which long warlike experience had given to the officers of Napoleon. Men and women, gray hairs, infant hands, the Turks, the Greeks, the Armenians, were to be seen promiscuously labouring together at the fortifications. Forgetting, in the general transport, the time-worn lines of religious distinction, the Greek and Armenian patriarchs set the first example of cordial acquiescence in the orders of government. Selim himself repeatedly visited the works; his commands were obeyed by two hundred thousand men, animated by religious and patriotic ardour to the greatest degree; while the French engineers, who had been sent by Marmont to aid in the war with the Russians, communicated to the busy multitude the inestimable advantages of scientific direction and experienced skill. Under such auspices, the defences of the harbour were speedily armed and strengthened; the naval arsenal furnished inexhaustible resources; in three days three hundred pieces of cannon were mounted on the batteries—at the

end of a week their number was increased to a thousand ; temporary parapets were every where formed with gabions and fascines, where regular defences were wanting ; the tower of Leander was armed with heavy artillery ; a hundred gun-boats were drawn across the mouth of the Golden Horn ; twelve line-of-battle ships within stood apparently ready for action ; fire-ships were prepared, and numerous furnaces with red-hot shot kept constantly heated to carry into the British fleet the conflagration with which they menaced the Turkish capital.¹*

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XLV.

1807.

¹ Jom. ii.
375, 377.
Dum. xvii.
284, 286.
Bign. vi. 200,
204. Ann.
Reg. 1807,
198, 199.

Although the English officers perceived, by means of their telescopes, the preparations which were going forward, and though the peril to the fleet was hourly increasing from the long continuance of a south-west wind, which rendered it impossible to pass the Straits, yet nothing was done adequate to the emergency. The ships, indeed, were brought nearer to the Seraglio, and every effort made to bring the enemy, by negotiation, to an accommodation : but the pride of the Mussulmans, now fully aroused, would not have permitted the government to come to terms, even if they had been so inclined ; and the influence of Sebastiani was successfully exerted to protract the conferences till the preparations were so far completed as to enable them to bid defiance to the enemy. The time when decisive success might have been attained had been allowed to pass away. Four days after the English fleet appeared off Constantinople, the coasts were so completely armed with artillery, as to render an attack eminently hazardous ; in a week it was totally hopeless. The object of the expedition having failed, nothing remained but to provide for the safety of the fleet : but this was now no easy matter ; for during the week lost in negotiation, the batteries of the Dardanelles had all been armed, and the castles of Europe and Asia so strengthened as to render it an extremely hazardous matter to attempt the passage.² To complete the difficulties of the English admiral, the wind, which generally blows at Constantinople from the north-east, continued,

69.

The English
renounce the
enterprise.

² Sir J.
Duckworth's
Despatch,
Ann. Reg.
1807, 664.
Jom. ii. 376.
Dum. xvii.
281, 282.

* The number of guns mounted on the batteries in six days was 917 pieces of cannon, and 200 mortars—an instance of vigour and rapidity in preparing the means of defence perhaps unparalleled in the history of the world.—See HARD. xi. 486 ; *Pièces Just.*

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XLV.

1807.

70.

The British
fleet repass
the Straits.
March 1.

ever after his arrival, fixed in the south-west, so as to render it totally impossible for him to retrace his steps.

At length on the 1st March, a breeze having sprung up from the Black Sea, all sails were spread, and the fleet re-entered the perilous Straits. But it was not without difficulty, and with considerable hazard, that the passage was effected. A heavy fire was kept up from all the batteries; the headlands on either side presented a continued line of smoke; the roar of artillery was incessant; and enormous stone balls, some of them weighing seven or eight hundred pounds, threatened at one stroke to sink the largest ships. One of these massy projectiles carried away the main-mast of the Windsor Castle, which bore the Admiral's flag; another penetrated the poop of the Standard, and killed and wounded sixty men. At length the fleet cleared the Straits, and cast anchor off Tenedos, in such a situation as to blockade the Dardanelles, having sustained a loss of two hundred and fifty men in this audacious expedition, which, though it proved unsuccessful from the errors attending its execution in the department of diplomacy, was both boldly conceived and ably executed, so far as the forcing the passage was concerned.

March 2.

¹ Ann. Reg.
1807, 200.
Sir J. Duck-
worth's
Despatch, ib.
664. Jom. ii.
376, 377.
Dum. xvii.
281, 293.
Bign. vi. 204,
207.

It produced a very great impression in Europe, by revealing the secret weakness of the Ottoman empire, and demonstrating how easily an adequate maritime force, by thus bursting through its defences, and aiming a stroke at once at the vitals of the state, could subdue all the strength of Islamism, and compel the submission of a power before which, in former times, all the monarchies of Europe had trembled.¹

71.
Blockade of
the Dar-
danelles.
July 1.

After the departure of the English fleet, all amicable relations were, of course, suspended with the Turkish government; the preparations of the Sultaun to strengthen the batteries both of the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles continued with undiminished activity; and the influence of General Sebastiani with the Divan became unbounded. The ease, however, with which the British fleet had surmounted all the defences of Constantinople, and the imminent risk which he had run of being deprived, by one blow, of the powerful aid of Turkey, gave the utmost uneasiness to Napoleon; and he despatched, without delay, orders both to Marmont in Illyria, and Eugene in

Italy, to forward instantly a number of able officers, among whom were Colonel Haxo of the engineers, and Colonel Foy of the artillery, to co-operate in the strengthening of the defences of Constantinople. Six hundred men were directed to be forthwith put at the disposal of the Grand Seignior, and authority given for the transmission of five thousand, with abundant supplies in money and ammunition, if required. These reinforcements, however, were not required; for though the English fleet was shortly after joined by the Russian squadron, under Admiral Siniavin, yet they had too recently experienced the dangers of the Straits to venture a second time into them, more especially after their defences had been so materially strengthened, as they soon were, by the operations of the French engineers. Contenting themselves, therefore, with taking possession of Lemnos and Tenedos for the service of their fleet, they established a close blockade of the entrance to the Straits from the Archipelago; and as a similar precaution was adopted at the mouth of the Bosphorus, the supply of the capital by water-carriage on both sides was interrupted, and before long a very great dearth of provisions was experienced.¹

The Turkish government made the utmost efforts to man their squadron, but this was no easy matter, as the blockade by the Russians deprived them of all intercourse with the Greeks, who constituted almost exclusively the nautical portion of their population. At length, however, the scarcity became so great that serious commotions took place in the capital; and the government having, by extraordinary severity, forced an adequate number of hands on board the fleet, the Capitan Pasha ventured to leave the protection of the forts in the Dardanelles, and give battle to the Russian fleet. But the result was what might have been expected from a contest between an inexperienced body of men, for the most part unacquainted with naval affairs, and recently torn from civil occupations, and a squadron manned by seamen who yield to none in Europe in the resolution with which they stand to their guns.* Though the Turks fought with great gallantry, they could not withstand the

CHAP.
XLV.
1807.

¹ Dum. xvii.
292, 293.
Jom. ii. 376,
377. Ann.
Reg. 1807,
201.

72.
Naval actions
off Tenedos.

July 1.

* "Lay your ship alongside a Frenchman," said Nelson, "but try to out-manceuvre a Russian."

CHAP.
XLV.

1807.

¹ Ann. Reg.
1807, 201,
202. Dum.
xvii. 292,
293. Jom. ii.
376, 379.

73.
Descent by
the British
on the coasts
of Egypt,
which is
defeated.

March 6.

April 22.

² Ann. Reg.
1807, 203,
204. Bign.
vi. 215, 217.

superior skill and more rapid fire of their antagonists: four of their ships were early in the day drifted out of the line, and the unskilful crews were unable, or unwilling, to bring them again into fire; the remainder, after this great loss, were surrounded, and in great part destroyed. Four ships of the line were taken with the vice-admiral, three were burned, and the shattered remnant driven for shelter under the cannon of the Dardanelles. So overbearing did the pressure of the Russians at sea now become, that it threatened the utmost dangers to the Ottoman government; when the blockade of the capital was raised, and a temporary respite obtained by the treaty of Tilsit, which, as will immediately appear, established a short and fallacious truce between these irreconcilable enemies.¹

Not content with this attack on the Turkish capital, the British government at the same time effected a descent on the coasts of Egypt. Deeming the opportunity favourable for regaining possession of that important country, which was still warmly coveted by Napoleon, and the cession of which into the feeble hands of the Mussulmans had been long a subject of regret, the British government resolved to send an expedition to the shores of the Nile, at the same time that it threatened with bombardment the Turkish capital. The land troops, under the command of General Mackenzie, set sail from Messina on the 6th of March, and landed near Rosetta on the 18th. Alexandria speedily capitulated; Damietta was also occupied without resistance; and General Fraser detached with two thousand five hundred men to effect the reduction of Rosetta, which commands one of the mouths of the Nile, and the possession of which was deemed essential to the regular supply of Alexandria with provisions. This place, however, held out; and as immediate succour was expected from the Mamelukes, Colonel Macleod was stationed with seven hundred men at El Hammed, in order to facilitate their junction with the besieging force. This detachment was speedily surrounded by an overwhelming body of Turkish horse, and after a gallant resistance, which repelled the attacks of their numerous squadrons till the whole ammunition was exhausted, entirely cut off.² The pro-

mised Mamelukes never made their appearance; and General Stewart, severely weakened by so great a loss, with difficulty made good his retreat, fighting all the way, to Alexandria, where he arrived with a thousand fewer men than he had set out.

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XLV.
1807.

The fortifications of that place, however, enabled the British to bid defiance to their desultory opponents; and it was soon found that the apprehensions of scarcity which had prompted this ill-fated expedition to Rosetta were entirely chimerical, as provisions speedily became more abundant than ever. But the British government, in which an important change at this time took place, became sensible of the impolicy of longer retaining this acquisition at a crisis when every nerve required to be exerted to protect their shores from the forces of Napoleon. It was with lively satisfaction, therefore, that they heard of the conclusion of a convention in autumn, by which it was stipulated that all the British prisoners in the hands of the Turks should be released, and

74.
Evacuation
of Alexan-
dria.

Sept. 23.

Alexandria surrendered to the latter; in virtue of which arrangement the English troops set sail from the mouth of the Nile in the end of September, and were brought to Gibraltar, where they were stationed, ere long co-operating in the retreat of the royal family of Portugal from the Tagus, and ultimately taking a share in the glories of the Peninsular campaigns.¹

¹ Ann. Reg.
1807, 203,
205. Bign.
vi. 215, 219.

The public dissatisfaction arising from these repeated defeats was so strong, that it seriously shook the stability of the ministry, and produced a very general impression even among that portion of the community who had hitherto supported them, that, however well qualified to direct the state during a period of profound peace, and when ample leisure was to be had for carrying into effect their projected reforms, they were not calculated for the existing crisis, in which these pacific ameliorations were of comparatively little consequence, and when what was imperatively called for was the capacity of warlike combination. But room was not afforded for this growing discontent to manifest itself in the usual way, so as to affect the fortunes of the administration, from another event at this time, which brought them into collision with the religious feelings of the sovereign, and ultimately led to their retirement from office.

75.
Great discon-
tent at these
repeated
defeats
throughout
Great
Britain.

CHAP.
XLV.

1807.

76.

Measures for
introducing
the Catholics
into the army
and navy
brought in
by Lord
Howick.

March 5.

¹ Parl. Deb.
ix. 1, 5.

77.
Arguments
in favour of
it by Lord
Howick.

It has been already mentioned that the general question of Catholic emancipation was brought forward in the session of 1805, and supported with all the weight and eloquence of the Whig party.* The ministerial leaders felt the necessity of making some effort, when in power, to redeem the pledges which they had so freely given when on the Opposition benches. Lord Grenville, in particular, who had formed part of the administration which resigned in 1801, in consequence of the declared repugnance of the sovereign to those concessions to the Catholics which Mr Pitt then deemed essential to the security of the country, considered himself called upon by every consideration, both of public policy and private honour, again to press them upon the legislature. In consequence of these impressions, Lord Howick (afterwards Earl Grey) moved, on the 5th of March, for leave to bring in a bill which should enable persons of every religious persuasion to serve in the army and navy, without any other condition but that of taking an oath specified in the bill, which was repugnant to no religious opinions. By the existing law, a Catholic in Great Britain could not rise to the rank even of a subaltern, in consequence of the necessity of officers of every grade taking the Test Oath; while in Ireland, under an act passed in the Irish parliament in 1793, persons of that religious persuasion were permitted to rise to any situation in the army, excepting commanders-in-chief of the forces, master-general of the ordnance, or general of the staff.¹

“Was it prudent,” said Lord Howick, “when we were contending with so powerful an enemy, to prevent, in this manner, a large portion of the population of the country from concurring in the common defence? What can be more anomalous than that in one united empire so great a discrepancy should prevail, as that on one side of St George’s Channel a Catholic may rise to the highest rank in the army, but on the other he cannot hold even an ensign’s commission? It was declared in 1793, when this restriction was removed by the Irish parliament, by his Majesty’s ministers in both Houses, that in two months they would grant a similar indulgence to persons

* *Ante*, Chap. xxxix. § 16.

of the Romish persuasion in Great Britain ; but this had never yet been done, and this monstrous inconsistency continued to disgrace the laws of the United Kingdom. It may fairly be admitted that the principle of this relaxation applies equally to dissenters of every description, and that it must lead to a general admission of persons of every religious persuasion to the army and navy ; but where is the danger of such liberality ? The proposed measure only enables the sovereign to appoint such persons to offices of high importance. It does not compel him to do so ; their appointment would still depend on the executive government, which would naturally avoid any dangerous or improper exercise of its authority ; and would, on the contrary, be enabled to take advantage in the common defence of the whole population of the country, without any of those restrictions which now, with a large proportion, damped the spirit or soured the affections.”¹

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XLV.

1807.

¹ Parl. Deb.
ix. 1, 7.

On the other hand it was strongly contended by Mr Perceval,—“The objections to this measure, strong as they are, are not so insuperable as to the system of which it forms a part, which originates in a laxity of principle on matters of religion, which is daily increasing, and threatens in its ultimate results to involve all our institutions in destruction. If it is desirable to preserve any thing in our ancient and venerable establishments, it is indispensable to make a stand at the outset against any innovations in so essential a particular. This measure is, in truth, a partial repeal of the Test Act ; if passed, it must at no distant period lead to the total repeal of that act, and with it to the downfall of the Protestant ascendancy in Ireland. The advocates of the Catholics argue as if their measures were calculated to support toleration, whereas, in reality and in their ultimate effects, they are calculated to destroy that great national blessing, by subverting the Protestant establishment, by whom toleration has been always both professed and practised, and reinstating the Romish, by whom it has been as uniformly repudiated. From the arguments that are advanced at the present day, one would be inclined to imagine that there was no such thing as truth or falsehood in religion ; that all creeds were equally conducive to the temporal

78.

Arguments
against it by
Mr Perceval.

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and eternal interests of mankind; and that, provided only the existing heats and dissensions on the subject could be allayed, it mattered not to what religious tenets either a government or a people inclined. True toleration is indeed an inestimable blessing, but it consists in permitting to every man the free exercise of his religion, not in putting into the hands of the professors of a hostile creed the means of overturning what they will never cease to regard as a pestilent heresy, and resuming from its present Protestant possessors the lost patrimony of St Peter in these islands.

79.
The alleged
tendency of
the measure.

“In point of law, it is incorrect to say, that a Catholic who has obtained a commission in Ireland is liable to any penalties: the Mutiny Act authorises the King to require in any part of his dominions the services of every man in his army, and this is of itself a practical repeal of the disability affecting Catholics; for no man can be compelled to do what would subject him to a penalty. The argument that all offices should be thrown open to persons of all religious persuasions, is inconsistent with the British constitution as settled in 1688, which is root and branch a Protestant establishment. If pushed to its legitimate length, it would throw open all offices, even the crown itself, to Catholic aspirants: what then becomes of the Act of Settlement, or the right of the house of Hanover to the throne? If this is to be the policy of their country, there is but one thing to be done—to do every thing to transfer the church lands in Ireland to the Catholics, re-establish the Catholic faith, and call over the Pretender to the throne of these realms. These are the great and dazzling objects which the Romish party have in view; it was to exclude them that all the restrictions were imposed by our ancestors on the persons professing that faith; it is to gain them that all these minor concessions are demanded by their adherents; their advances are only the more dangerous that they are gradual, unperceived, and veiled under the colour of philanthropy. The Catholics already enjoy every thing which toleration can demand; to ask more is to demand weapons to be used against ourselves. The consequences of a storm are little to be apprehended; it is the gradual approaches which are really dangerous.¹ If parliament

¹ Parl. Deb.
ix. 9, 11.

goes on allowing this accumulation, *it will ultimately have that extorted from its weakness which its wisdom would be desirous to withhold.*" *

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The second reading of this interesting bill was adjourned from time to time, without the nation being either alive to its importance or aware of the quarter in which obstacles to its progress existed. But on the 24th March, it was suddenly announced in the newspapers that ministers had been dismissed; and two nights after, Lord Grenville in the House of Lords, and Lord Howick in the House of Commons, gave a full statement of the circumstances which had led to so unlooked-for a change. The draft of the bill, as usual in all matters of importance, had been submitted to his Majesty for his consideration; and it contained a recital of the Irish Act which opened the army to Catholics for every grade, with the exception of the offices of master-general of the ordnance, commander-in-chief of the forces, and general of the staff; and then provided that the services of the Catholics should be received without any restriction, and the condition only of taking the oath of allegiance. On this bill being proposed, the King manifested considerable objections to it: but these were at length so far overcome that ministers were authorised to bring in the bill, and communications were made to the heads of the Catholics in Ireland, that they were to be admitted to every situation in the army without exception. The King, however, had laboured under some misapprehension as to the extent and tendency of the measure which was to be brought forward, and believed that it was not intended to enlarge the facilities of admission created by the act 1793 for Ireland, but only to make that act the general law of the empire; for no sooner was its import explained in the debate which occurred on the first reading in the House of Commons, of which an abstract has already been given, than he intimated to the govern-

80.

Repugnance
of the King
to the bill,
which is
withdrawn.
March 24.

* Subsequent events, more particularly the fierce agitation for repeal in 1843, after Catholic emancipation had been conceded, have rendered these early debates and predictions on the effects of concession to the Catholics in the highest degree curious and interesting. Without pronouncing any decided opinion on a subject on which the light of experience is only now beginning to shine upon the world, it is the duty of the historian to urge the discussions on this subject on the attentive consideration of every candid inquirer, either into political wisdom or historic truth.

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81.
The King
requires a
written
pledge that
no further
concessions
should be
made to the
Catholics.
Change of
ministry.

ment that he had invincible objections to the proposed change.

After some ineffectual attempts at a compromise, ministers, finding the King resolute, determined to withdraw the bill altogether, and intimated this decision to his Majesty, accompanied, however, with the conditions that they should not be precluded from stating their opinions on the general policy of the measure in parliament, and that they should be at liberty, from time to time, to bring the matter again under his Majesty's consideration. The answer of the King, after expressing regret at the difference of opinion which had arisen, rejected these conditions as inconsistent with the fundamental principle of the constitution, that the acts of government are to be held as those of the responsible ministers, and that the adoption or rejection of no measure is to be laid upon his Majesty; and as not less at variance with the fundamental basis of the Act of Settlement, which is rested on the exclusion of Catholics from the highest office in the realm. His Majesty therefore required a written pledge from ministers that they would propose no further concessions to the Catholics. This pledge ministers, on their side, considered as inconsistent with the fundamental principle of a free constitution, which is, that the king can do no wrong, and that the responsibility of all public measures must rest with his advisers, and equally repugnant to that progressive change in human affairs which might at no distant period render a repetition of the proposal a matter of necessity. They therefore declined, though in the most respectful terms, to give the proposed pledge, and the consequence was, that the King, in gracious terms, sent them an intimation that their services were no longer required; and on the same day the Duke of Portland, Lord Hawkesbury, and Mr Perceval, received the royal commands to form a new administration.¹

¹ Lord Grenville's, Howick's, Hawkesbury's and Mr Perceval's Speeches. Parl. Deb. ix. 247, 258, 261, 278.

Parliament, after this unexpected event, was adjourned till the 8th April, and on that day the new ministers took their seats. The change of administration, of course, formed the first and most anxious subject of debate; and the interest of the country was excited to the highest degree, by the arguments which were urged for and

against that important and unwonted exercise of the royal prerogative.* On the side of the former ministers, it was urged by Sir Samuel Romilly and Lord Howick:—"The true question at issue is, whether or not it would have been constitutionally justifiable, or rather would not have been a high crime and misdemeanour, for any minister to have subscribed a written pledge that he would never in future bring a particular measure or set of measures under his Majesty's consideration. If any statesman could be found base enough to give such a pledge, he would deserve to lose his head, and the House would be guilty of a dereliction of its duty, if it did not impeach a minister who so far forgot his duty to the country. This is a matter in which the interests of the crown were more at stake than even those of the people: for if the precedent is once to be allowed, that a minister is at liberty to surrender his own private judgment to the will of the reigning sovereign, it is impossible that the legal fiction, that the king can do no wrong, can any longer be maintained, and the great constitutional principle, that the acts of the king are those of his responsible advisers, will be at an end. Who could, in such a view, set bounds to the dangerous encroachments of unknown and irresponsible advisers upon the deliberations of government, or say how far the ostensible ministers might be thwarted and overruled by unknown and secret

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82.

Arguments
in parliament
against the
King's con-
duct.

* The new cabinet stood thus:—

Not in the cabinet.

Earl Camden, President of the Council.

Lord Eldon, Chancellor.

Earl of Westmoreland, Lord Privy Seal.

Duke of Portland, First Lord of the Treasury.

Lord Mulgrave, First Lord of the Admiralty.

Earl of Chatham, Master-General of the Ordnance.

Earl Bathurst, President of the Board of Trade.

Lord Hawkesbury, Home Secretary.

Mr Canning, Foreign Secretary.

Lord Castlereagh, War and Colonial Secretary.

Mr Perceval, Chancellor of the Exchequer and Duchy of Lancaster.

—See *Parl. Deb.* ix. 111.

Mr Robert Dundas, President of the Board of Control.

Mr George Rose, President of the Board of Trade.

Sir James Pulteney, Secretary at War.

Sir Vicary Gibbs, Attorney-General.

Sir Thomas Plummer, Solicitor-General.

Duke of Richmond, Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland.

Composition
of the new
cabinet.

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influence, which might totally stop the action of a constitutional government? The danger of the measure which has been adopted is only rendered the greater by the announcement now openly made, that in this, the most important step perhaps taken in his whole reign, his Majesty had no advisers. The constitution recognises no such doctrine; the advisers of the King throughout must be held to be those who have succeeded to his councils. There is no desire to bring the sovereign to the bar of the House of Commons; it is the new ministers who are really the objects of deliberation. The late administration was dismissed because they refused to bind themselves by a specific pledge never to renew the subject of Catholic concession; a new ministry have succeeded them; they must be held therefore to have given that pledge, and it is for the House to say, whether such a dereliction of public duty is not utterly at variance with every principle of constitutional freedom.”¹

¹ Parl. Deb.
ix. 327, 330,
338, 341.

83.
And in sup-
port of it by
Mr Perceval
and Mr
Canning.

On the other hand, it was argued by Mr Perceval and Mr Canning:—“The question on which the imprudent zeal of the late administration has brought them into collision with the religious scruples and political wisdom of the sovereign, is not one of trivial moment, in which the monarch may be expected to abide by the judgment of his constitutional advisers. It lies, on the contrary, at the foot of the whole constitution; it constitutes one of the foundations *non tangenda non movenda*, on which the entire fabric of our Protestant liberties has been reared. The present question regards the transference of the sword to Catholic hands; the same question on which Charles I. erected his standard at Northampton—the intrusting the direction of the military force to a party necessarily and permanently inimical to our Protestant constitution, both in church and state. It is absurd to suppose this concession would do any thing towards satisfying the Catholics—it would only lead them to make fresh demands, and empower them to urge them with additional weight; and the consequence of the measure could be nothing else, in the end, but to bring Catholic Bishops into the House of Lords. Was it surprising that the King paused on the threshold of

such a question, striking, as it evidently did, at the root of the tenure by which his own family held their right to the throne.

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“In demanding a pledge that such a proposal should not be renewed, he acted without any adviser, upon the unaided dictates of his own masculine understanding, aided by the conscientious scruples of his unsophisticated heart. All the talent of the cabinet could not blind him to the evident and inevitable, though possibly remote, consequences of such a fatal precedent as was now sought to be forced upon him. It is a palpable mistake to say he drew back in the later stages of the negotiation from what he had previously agreed to; he first gave a reluctant consent to the extension of the Irish Act of 1793 to Great Britain, in the firm belief that this was all that was required of him; so the proposed measure was explained to and understood by him; and that he was not singular in this belief is proved by the fact, that the Irish Secretary had his doubts upon it, and that the Irish Chancellor of the Exchequer, in answer to a question as to the second reading of the bill, said there was no particular reason for the Irish members being present on that occasion, as they were already acquainted with the measure. Three cabinet ministers, viz. the Lord Chancellor, Lord Sidmouth, and Lord Ellenborough, refused to concur in the measure, when they understood how far it was to be carried; the Chancellor was not even summoned to the council at which it was to be discussed, though he was in a peculiar manner the keeper of the King’s conscience; and even the person who was commissioned to procure the King’s consent to the measure, did not understand the extent to which it was to be carried.

84.
The sovereign
had been left
in the dark
as to the
extent of the
measure.

“Having thus been misled, whether designedly or inadvertently it mattered not, in so vital a particular by his ministers, was it surprising that the King should have required from them a pledge that they would not again harass him on the same subject? Undoubtedly no minister should give a pledge to fetter the exercise of his own judgment on future occasions; but that was not here required; for if circumstances in future might

85.
Defence of
his conduct
in requiring
the pledge
from minis-
ters.

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render a renewal of the measure necessary, they might at once resign. The King regarded this measure as a violation of his coronation oath, as destructive to the Protestant church in Ireland, and in its ultimate effects likely to endanger our whole Protestant constitution. Unquestionably it was to be regretted that on any occasion the private opinion of the sovereign should be brought forward apart from that of his constitutional advisers; but for this evil those must answer who, by forcing on a rash and unnecessary measure, compelled him to rely on his own judgment alone. And it is some consolation to reflect, that, in proportion as the Sovereign has been made more constitutionally responsible in his own person, he must become better known to his people; and the soundness of judgment, promptness and vivacity of intellect which have enabled him to bear up alone against the united weight of the cabinet, have only evinced, in the more striking manner, how worthy he is to fill the throne which his family attained by the principle he has now so manfully defended.”¹ Upon a division, there appeared two hundred and fifty-eight for the new ministers, and two hundred and twenty-six for the old—leaving a majority of thirty-two for the existing government.¹

¹ Parl. Deb.
ix. 314, 321,
342, 346.
² Ibid. ix.
348.

86.
Dissolution of
parliament,
and great
majority for
the new
ministers.

This majority, though sufficient to enable ministers to conduct the public business during the remainder of that session, was not adequate to carry on the government during the arduous crisis which awaited them in the administration of foreign affairs. They resolved, therefore, to strengthen themselves by a dissolution of parliament; and the event decisively proved that the King had not miscalculated the loyalty and religious feeling of the English people on this trying emergency. Parliament was prorogued on the 27th April, and soon after dissolved by royal proclamation. The utmost efforts were made by both parties on this occasion to augment their respective forces; to the usual heats and excitement of a general election were superadded the extraordinary passions arising from the recent dismissal of an administration from office, and consequent elevation of another in their stead. All the usual means of exciting popular enthusiasm were resorted to without scruple on both

sides. The venality and corruption of the Tories, alleged to be so strikingly evinced in their recent elevation of Lord Melville, after the stain consequent on the tenth report of the commissioners, were the subject of loud declamation from the Whigs; the scandalous attempt to force the King's conscience, and induce a Popish tyranny on the land, yet wet with the blood of the Protestant martyrs, was as vehemently re-echoed from the other. "No Peculation," "No Popery," were the war-cries of the respective parties; and amidst banners, shouts, and universal excitement, the people were called on to exercise the most important rights of free citizens. To the honour of the empire, however, this great contest was conducted without bloodshed or disorder in any quarter; and the result decisively proved that, in taking his stand upon the inviolate maintenance of the Protestant constitution, the King had a great majority of all classes throughout the empire on his side. Almost all the counties and chief cities of Great Britain returned members in the interest of the new ministry; defeat after defeat, in every quarter, told the Whigs how far they had miscalculated the spirit of the age; and on the first division in the ensuing parliament they were overthrown by a great majority in both houses—that in the Peers being ninety-seven, in the Commons no less than one hundred and ninety-five.*

June 26.
1 Ann. Reg.
1807, 238,
239.

Though this important step of the King in dismissing the ministry was adopted on his own private judgment, and from the strength of his native resolution alone, yet it had the effect of bringing into a prominent place in his councils a man of great capacity, who held for nearly twenty years after the important situation of chancellor, and whose powerful mind communicated its impress to the policy of government during the most momentous period of British history. John Scott, afterwards Lord Eldon, was born at Newcastle-on-Tyne, on 4th June 1751. He was the eighth son of William

87.
Biography of
Lord Eldon.

* The numbers were—

In the Peers, for the Whigs,	67	In the Commons, for the Whigs,	155
For the Tories,	164	For the Tories,	350
Majority,	97	Majority,	195

—Ann. Reg. 1807, 238-239.

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¹ Twiss's Life
of Eldon, i.
5, 44.

88.
His rise at
the bar, to
the office of
chancellor.

Scott, a respectable trader engaged in the coal business in that city: and his elder brother William, afterwards Lord Stowell, had been born on 17th September 1745, at Haworth, near the same town. Thus the same family had the singular good fortune of giving birth to the two greatest lawyers in their respective departments, and not the least remarkable men, of their day. Their father not having been in affluent circumstances, they were sent to the Royal Grammar-school, a charitable establishment in Newcastle, to which the sons of burghesses in that town were entitled, free of cost. John Scott there met a boy of equally obscure parentage—Cuthbert Collingwood, afterwards Lord Collingwood, the worthy companion of Nelson and St Vincent in the brightest days of England's glory. From such humble origin did the future rulers and statesmen of England at that period take their rise!¹

William Scott, the elder brother, early evinced such extraordinary abilities that, at the age of sixteen, his parents were induced to put him forward as a candidate for a scholarship at Oxford, for the diocese of Durham, which he obtained in 1761. This laid the foundation of the fortunes both of himself and his younger brother John, who at the age of sixteen followed him to that celebrated seat of learning, in 1766. William Scott soon obtained a fellowship, and gave lectures, which were much admired, on public law. John Scott took his degree in 1772, made a runaway marriage in Scotland in the same year, which imposed on him the necessity of exertion, and in 1774 and 1775 gave lectures on law as deputy for Robert Chambers, professor of law, for which he was glad to receive £60 a-year. In 1775 he was called to the bar; and although he experienced the usual amount of disappointment which almost invariably, in that profession, precedes eminence, yet such was the vigour of his mind, and the unconquerable perseverance of his character, that it soon became evident to his friends that opportunity only was wanting to make him rise to the highest eminence. The opportunity came earlier to him than it does to many others with equal powers and anxiety to do well. After four years of severe labour, and no progress, he

fortunately obtained an opportunity of being heard in a question of disputed succession,* in which his learning ultimately prevailed with Lord Chancellor Thurlow, though the decision had been adverse in the court below. That case made his fortune. He was soon after taken into the great case of the Clitheroe election, before a committee of the House of Commons, and, from the admirable appearance he made there, rapidly rose to the head of his profession. His secret for doing so was energetically expressed by himself in a few words, "To live like a hermit, and work like a horse,"—a rule which will probably ensure success, even to ordinary abilities, in other professions besides the bar. In 1783 he received a silk gown from the coalition administration, and in the same year was elected member of parliament for Weobly. In 1788 he was appointed Solicitor-general, and knighted. In 1793 he was elevated to the rank of Attorney-general, and in that capacity conducted the memorable treason trials of Hardy and Horne Tooke, in the succeeding year; and in 1801, on the resignation of Lord Loughborough, he was appointed Lord Chancellor by the title of Lord Eldon.¹

¹ Twiss's Life of Eldon, i. 45, 364.

Lord Eldon enjoyed a larger share of the confidence of George III. and the great majority of the royal family, than any other minister after the death of Mr Pitt; and his views influenced in a material degree the conduct of that monarch on many important occasions, and on none more than in the stand he made against the Catholic claims in 1806. Similarity of character, identity of principles, was the cause of this strong prepossession and daily increasing influence. Lord Eldon was in the cabinet what the King was on the throne. Both were thoroughly English in their ideas and character. They had the virtues equally with the failings, the excellencies and the defects of that temperament. Moral courage, fearless determination in council, was the grand characteristic of both. Neither had very extensive information out of the circle of their professional habits, (if such a word can fitly be applied to a sovereign;) but both had a large share of that

89.
His character as a lawyer and statesman.

* *Ackroyd v. Smithson*; BROWN'S *Chancery Cases*, i. 505.

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strong good sense, practical sagacity, and clear perception, which so often, in the real business of life, obtain the mastery both of knowledge, genius, and accomplishments. "Church and King" was Eldon's motto, and adherence to the constitution in all points his ruling principle. He was the last of the sturdy old patriots of former and more quiescent days, and stands forth in history as the "ultimus Romanorum—" the latest relic of a race which, by their firmness and resolution, created the British empire. As a lawyer, his learning was unbounded, his understanding sound, his memory prodigious; and although the strength of his conscientious feelings in deciding cases in the court of last resort often led to distressing delays, yet his judgments, when they were pronounced, were almost always right, and have attained a weight which belongs to none others in Westminster Hall.

90.
Character of
the Whig
ministry, and
effects of their
fall.

On reviewing the external measures of the Whig administration, it is impossible to deny that their removal from office at that period was a fortunate event for the British empire in its ultimate results, and proved eminently favourable to the cause of freedom throughout the world. Notwithstanding all their talent—and they had a splendid array of it in their ranks,—notwithstanding all their philanthropy—and their domestic measures were generally dictated by its spirit,—they could not at that period have long maintained the confidence of the English people; and their unfortunate shipwreck on the Catholic question only accelerated a catastrophe already prepared by many concurrent causes. External disaster, the reproaches of our allies, the unbroken progress of our enemies, must ere long have occasioned their fall. The time was not suited, the national temper not then adapted, for those domestic reforms on which the wishes of their partisans had long been set, and which in pacific times were calculated to have excited so powerful a popular feeling in their favour. The active and ruling portion of the nation had grown up to manhood during the war with France; the perils, the glories, the necessities of that struggle were universally felt; the military spirit had spread, with the general arming of the people, to a degree hitherto unparalleled in the British islands. Vigour

in the prosecution of the contest was then indispensably necessary for general support ; capacity for warlike combination the one thing needful for lasting popularity. In these particulars the Whig ministry, notwithstanding all their talents, were eminently deficient ; and the part they had taken throughout the contest disqualified them from conducting it to a successful issue. They had so uniformly opposed the war with France, that they were by no means equally impressed with the nation either with its dangers or its inevitable character : they had so strenuously on every occasion deprecated the system of coalitions, that they could hardly, in consistency with their former principles, take a suitable part in that great confederacy by which alone its overgrown strength could be reduced. Their system of warfare, accordingly, was in every respect adverse to that which the nation then desired. Founded upon a secession from all alliances, when the people passionately desired to share in the dangers and glories of a continental struggle : calculated upon a defensive system for a long course of years, when the now aroused spirit of the empire deemed it practicable, by a vigorous and concentrated effort, to bring the contest at once to a successful termination.

The foreign disasters which attended their military and naval enterprises in all parts of the world profoundly affected the British people, more impatient than any in Europe, both of the expense of warlike preparation and of defeat in warlike adventure. The capitulation at Buenos Ayres, the flight from the Dardanelles, the catastrophe in Egypt, succeeding one another in rapid succession, were felt the more keenly that they occurred on the theatres of our greatest triumphs by land and sea, or blasted hopes the most extravagant of commercial advantage. And yet it is now abundantly evident that defeat on the shores of the La Plata and the banks of the Nile, was more to be desired than victory ; and that no calamity could have been so great as the successful issue of these expeditions. They were conceived in the most inconsiderate manner, and aimed at objects which, if gained, must have paralysed the strength of the empire. At the moment when the armies of Napoleon were crossing the Thuringian forests, ten thousand English soldiers

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91.

Reflections
on their
foreign mea-
sures.

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embarked for South America: when the scales of war hung even on the fields of Poland, five thousand men were sent to certain destruction amidst the cavalry of Egypt. Their united force, if thrown into the scale at Eylau, would have driven the French Emperor to a disastrous retreat across the Rhine, and induced, seven years before they occurred, the glories of Leipsic and Waterloo. What could be more impolitic than, after Russia had given such decisive proof of its extraordinary resolution and devotion to the cause of Europe, in February 1807, to send out a miserable little expedition to Alexandria in March following, too large for piracy, too small for conquest, and the success of which could have no other effect but that of riveting the hostility of Turkey to Russia and its allies, and thereby securing to Napoleon the inestimable advantage of a powerful diversion on the side of the Danube? What more impolitic than, when the finances of that great power were exhausted by the extraordinary expenses of the contest, to refuse to the Emperor not only a subsidy, but even the British guarantee to a loan which he was desirous of contracting in the British dominions, unless accompanied by the cession of custom-house duties in Russia in security?—dealing thus with the greatest potentate in Europe, at the very moment when he was perilling his very crown in our cause, as well as his own, in the same manner as a Jewish pawnbroker does with a suspicious applicant for relief.

92.
And their
glaring
neglect of the
Russian war.

The battle of Eylau should have been the signal for the contracting the closest alliance with the Russian government; the instant advance of loans to any amount; the marching of sixty thousand English soldiers to the nearest points of embarkation. This was the crisis of the war: the imprudent confidence of Napoleon had drawn him into a situation full of peril. For the first time in his life he had been overmatched in a pitched battle, and hostile nations, besetting three hundred leagues of communication in his rear, were ready to intercept his retreat. No effort on the part of England could have been too great in order to turn to the best account so extraordinary a combination of favourable circumstances; no demonstration of confidence too unreserved to an ally capable of such

sacrifices. Can there be a doubt that such a vigorous demonstration would at once have terminated the hesitation of Austria, revived the spirit of Prussia, and by throwing a hundred thousand men on each flank of his line of communication, driven the French Emperor to a ruinous retreat? Is it surprising that when, instead of such co-operation, Alexander, after the sacrifices he had made, met with nothing but refusals to his repeated and most earnest applications for assistance, and saw the land force of England wasted on useless distant expeditions, when every bayonet and sabre was of value on the banks of the Alle, he should have conceived a distrust of the English alliance, and formed the resolution of extricating himself as soon as possible from the hazardous conflict in which he was now exclusively engaged?*

To these general censures on the foreign policy of England at this juncture, an exception must be made in the case of the expedition to the Dardanelles. It was ably conceived, and vigorously entered upon. The stroke there aimed by England was truly at the heart of her adver-

* "In the Foreign office," said Mr Canning, when Minister of Foreign Affairs in 1807, "are to be found not one but twenty letters from the Marquis of Douglas, ambassador to the Whigs at St Petersburg, intimating, in the strongest terms, that unless effectual aid was sent to the Emperor of Russia, he would abandon the contest." Ample proof of this exists in the correspondence relating to that subject which was laid before parliament. On 28th November 1806, the Marquis wrote to Lord Howick, afterwards Earl Grey, from St Petersburg—"General Budberg lately told me that his Imperial Majesty had expressly directed him to urge the expediency of partial expeditions on the coast of France and Holland, for the purpose of distracting the attention of the enemy, and impeding the march of the French reserves. The extraordinary expenses arising from the disasters of Prussia have rendered a loan of six millions sterling indispensable, which his Imperial Majesty is exceedingly desirous should be negotiated in England." On 18th December 1806, he again wrote—"At court this morning his Imperial Majesty again urged, in the strongest terms, the expedience of a diversion on the enemy in the north of Europe by a powerful expedition to the coasts of France or Holland." On 2d January 1807—"I have again heard the *strongest complaints* that the whole of the enemy's forces are directed against Russia, at a moment when Great Britain does not show any disposition to diminish the danger by a diversion against France and Holland." On January 14th—"I must not conceal from your Lordships that the silence of his Majesty's government respecting a military diversion on the coast of France, has not produced a favourable impression either on the ministry or people of this country." On January 26th—"Baron Budberg has again complained of the situation in which Russia has now been placed, having been left alone against France, without either support on one side or diversion on the other." On February 4th—"During this interview. General Budberg seized every opportunity of complaining that the Russians were left without any military assistance on the part of Great Britain." On February 15th—"I cannot sufficiently express the *extreme anxiety* felt here that some expedition should be undertaken by Great Britain, to divert the general concentration of the enemy's forces on the banks of the Vistula." Notwithstanding these and numberless similar remonstrances, and urgent calls for aid, the British government did nothing; they declined to guarantee the loan of six millions, which was indis-

Repeated and ineffectual applications which Alexander had made for aid from England during the Polish war.

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93.

The Dardanelles expedition is an exception to the general inexpedience of their foreign policy.

sary; the fire of Duckworth's broadsides was concentric with that of the batteries of Eylau; if successful, they would have added forty thousand men to the Russian standards. This object was so important that it completely vindicates the expedition; the only thing to be regretted is, that the force put at the disposal of the British admiral was not such as to have rendered victory a matter of certainty. As it was, however, it was adequate to the object; and this bold and well-conceived enterprise would certainly have been crowned with deserved success, but for the extraordinary talents and energy of General Sebastiani, and the unfortunate illness of Mr Arbuthnot, which threw the conduct of the negotiation into the hands of the British admiral, who, however gallant in action, was no match for his adversary in that species of contest, and wasted in fruitless efforts for an accommodation those precious moments which should have been devoted to the most vigorous warlike demonstrations.

After all, the unsuccessful issue of these expeditions,

pensable to the equipment of the Russian militia and reserves; they sent neither succours in men, money, nor arms, grounding their refusal on the necessity of husbanding their resources for a protracted contest, or a struggle on their own shores. On Jan. 13th, Lord Howick wrote—"In looking forward to a protracted contest, for which the successes and inveterate hostility of the enemy must oblige this country to provide, his Majesty feels it to be his duty to *preserve as much as possible* the resources to be derived from the affections of his people." It is difficult to find in history an example of a more ill-judged and discreditable parsimony; "husbanding," as Mr Canning afterwards said, "your muscles till you lose the use of them."

The infatuation of this conduct appears in still more striking colours, when the vast amount of the military then lying dormant in the British islands is taken into account. Notwithstanding the useless or pernicious expeditions to Buenos Ayres and Alexandria, England had still a disposable regular force of *eighty thousand men* in the British islands. Her military force, Jan. 1807, was as follows:—

Regulars.	Militia.	Volunteers.
Cavalry at home, 20,041	In Great Britain, 53,810	Infantry, 254,544
Infantry ditto, 61,447	In Ireland, 24,180	Cavalry, 25,342
		Artillery, 9,420
Total ditto, 81,488	77,990	
Infantry abroad, 93,114		289,306
Cavalry ditto, 6,274		
Total, 180,876		

Total in arms in British isles—of whom 81,488 were regulars, 448,784

But of this immense force, lying within a day's sail of France and Holland, and including eighty thousand regulars, certainly seventy or eighty thousand might without difficulty have been sent to the Continent. In fact, in 1809, England had above seventy thousand regular soldiers at one time in Spain and Holland. Little more than half this force conquered Napoleon at Waterloo. Thrown into the scale in March or April 1807, it would at once have decided the contest.—See *Parl. Paper*, July 18, 1807; *Parl. Deb.* ix. 111, *Appendix*.

and the severe mortification which their failure occasioned to the British people, had a favourable effect on the future stages of the contest. It is by experience only that truth is brought home to the masses of mankind. Mr Pitt's external policy had been distracted by the number and eccentric characters of his maritime expeditions ; but they were important in some degree, as wresting their colonial possessions from the enemy, and overshadowed by the grandeur and extent of his continental confederacies. Now, however, the same system was pursued when hardly any colonies remained to be conquered, and continental combination was abandoned at the very time when sound policy counselled the vigorous and simultaneous direction of all the national and European resources against the heart of the enemy's power. The absurdity and impolicy of this system, glaring as they were, might have long failed in bringing it into general discredit ; but this was at once effected by the disasters and disgrace with which its last exertions were attended. The opinion, in consequence, became universal, that it was impolitic as well as unworthy of its resources for so great a nation to waste its strength in subordinate and detached operations : England, it was felt, must be brought to wrestle hand to hand with France before the struggle could be brought to a successful issue : the conquerors of Alexandria and Maida had no reason to fear a more extended conflict with land forces ; greater and more glorious fields of fame were passionately desired, and that general longing after military renown was felt which prepared the nation to support the burdens of the Peninsular war, and share in the glories of Wellington's campaigns.

CHAP.
XLV.

1807.

94.

These defeats
were ultimately bene-
ficial.

CHAPTER XLVI.

CAMPAIGN OF FRIEDLAND, AND PEACE OF TILSIT.
APRIL—JULY, 1807.

CHAP.
XLVI.

1807.

1.

Negotiations
and treaties
between the
Allies for the
vigorous pro-
secution of
the war.

THE change of ministry in England was attended with an immediate alteration in the policy pursued by that power with respect to continental affairs. The men who now succeeded to the direction of its foreign relations had been educated in the school of Mr Pitt, and had early imbibed the ardent feelings of hostility with which he was animated towards the French Revolution. They were fully alive to the insatiable spirit of foreign aggrandisement to which the passions springing from its convulsions had led. Mr Canning and Lord Castlereagh were strongly impressed with the disastrous effects which had resulted from the economical system of their predecessors, and the ill-judged economy which had led them to starve the war at the decisive moment, and hold back at a time when, by a vigorous application of their resources, it might at once have been brought to a triumphant conclusion. No sooner, therefore, were they in possession of the reins of power than they hastened to supply the defect, and take measures for bringing the might of England to bear on the contest in a manner worthy of its present greatness and ancient renown. An immediate advance of £100,000 was made to the King of Prussia; arms and military stores were furnished for the use of his troops to the amount of £200,000; and negotiations set on foot for concluding with the cabinets of St Petersburg, Berlin, and Stockholm, conventions for concerted operations and a vigorous prosecution of the war.¹

April 2.

¹ Lucches. ii.
297. Hard.
ix. 297, 298.
Parl. Deb. x.
103, 104.

In April, the cabinet of Vienna interposed its good offices to effect an adjustment of the differences of the Allied powers; but Mr Canning, while he accepted the offer of a mediation, did so under the express condition of its being communicated to the other belligerent powers, and of their accession to its conditions. But, as they had already concluded engagements for the active prosecution of the contest, the proposed negotiation never took place; and England, under the guidance of its new administration, instead of entering into terms with France, reverted, in the most decided manner, to Mr Pitt's system of uncompromising hostility to its ambition. A treaty was signed at Bartenstein, in East Prussia, in the end of the same month, between Russia and Prussia, for the future prosecution of the war. By this convention it was stipulated that neither of the contracting parties should make peace without the concurrence of the other; that the Confederation of the Rhine, which had proved so fatal to the liberties of Germany, should be dissolved, and a new confederacy, for the protection of its interests, formed, under the auspices of its natural protectors, Austria and Prussia; that the latter power should recover the dominions which it had held in September 1805, and that Austria should be requested to accede to this treaty in order to regain its possessions in Tyrol and the Venetian provinces, and extend its frontier to the Mincio. Finally, Great Britain was formally invited to unite with the contracting powers, by furnishing succours in arms, ammunition, and money to them, and the debarkation of a strong auxiliary force at the mouth of the Elbe, to co-operate with the Swedes in the rear of the enemy, while Austria should menace his communications, and the combined Russian and Prussian armies should attack him in front.¹

To this convention Sweden had already given its adhesion by the signature of a treaty, six days before, for the employment of an auxiliary force of twelve thousand men in Pomerania; and England hastened to unite itself to the same confederacy. By a convention signed at London on the 17th June, England gave in its accession to the treaty of Bartenstein, and engaged to support the Swedish force in Pomerania by a corps of twenty thousand British

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1807.

2.

Austria
strives to
mediate be-
tween the
contending
powers.
April 3.
Treaty be-
tween Prussia
and Russia
at Barten-
stein.

April 25.

¹ Lucches. ii.
297, 300.
Parl. Deb. x.
103, 104.
Hard. ix. 401,
402. Bign. vi.
234. Martens,
viii. 603, 604.

3.

To which
England and
Sweden
accede.
June 17.

CHAP.
XLVI.1807.
June 23.

¹ Schoell, ix.
141. Luc-
ches. ii. 302,
303. Bign. vi.
234. Dum.
xviii. 216,
217. Hard. ix.
402, 405.
Parl. Deb. ix.
974, and x.
102, 103.
Martens, viii.
603.

4.
But too late
to prevent the
irritation of
Russia.

soldiers to act against the rear and left flank of the French army; while, by a relative agreement on the 23d, the Swedish auxiliary force in British pay was to be raised to eighteen thousand men, and the provisions of the fundamental treaty of alliance in April 1805, were again declared in force against the common enemy. Shortly after, a treaty was signed at London between Great Britain and Prussia, by which a subsidy of a million sterling was promised to the latter power for the campaign of 1807, and a secret article stipulated for succours yet more considerable, if necessary, to carry into full effect the purposes of the convention of Bartenstein. Thus, by the return of England to the principles of Mr Pitt's foreign policy, were the provisions of the great confederacy of 1805 again revived on the part of the northern powers; and to Great Britain it is not the least honourable part of these transactions, as Mr Canning justly observed, that the treaty with Prussia was signed when that power was almost entirely bereft of its possessions, and agreed to by Frederick William in the only town that remained to him of his once extensive dominions.¹

But it was all in vain: the succours of England came too late to counterbalance the disasters which had been incurred; the change of system was too tardy to assuage the irritation which had been produced. By withholding these at an earlier period, the former ministry had not only seriously weakened the strength of the Russian forces, by preventing the arming of the numerous militia corps which were crowding to the Imperial standards, but left the seeds of irreconcilable dissatisfaction in the breast of the Czar, who, not aware of the total change of policy which the accession of the Whig ministry had produced in the cabinet of St James's, and the complete revolution in that policy which had resulted from their dismissal, was actuated by the strongest resentment against the British government, and loudly complained that he was deserted by the ancient ally of Russia at the very moment when, for its interests, even more than his own, he was risking his empire in a mortal struggle with the French Emperor.* Such was the state of destitution to

* These angry feelings are very clearly evinced in General Budberg's answer to Lord Leveson Gower's (the British ambassador at St Petersburg) remon-

which the ill-judged parsimony of the late administration had reduced the British arsenals, and such the effect of their total dismissal of transports in the royal service, that it was found impossible by their successors to fit out an expedition for the shores of the Baltic for several months after their accession to office ; and, in consequence, the formidable armament under Lord Cathcart, which afterwards achieved the conquest of Copenhagen, and might have appeared with decisive effect on the shores of the Elbe or the Vistula at the opening of the campaign, was not able to leave the shores of Britain till the end of July—a fortnight after the treaty of Tilsit had been signed, and the subjugation of the Continent, to all appearance, irrevocably effected.*

¹ Parl. Deb.
ix. 1035, 1036.
Hard. ix. 425.
Ann. Reg.
1807, 22, 23.

strance on the conclusion at Tilsit of a separate peace by Russia with France. “The firmness and perseverance with which his Majesty, during eight months, maintained and defended a cause common to all sovereigns, are the most certain pledges of the intentions which animated him, as well as of the loyalty and purity of his principles. Never would his Imperial Majesty have thought of deviating from that system which he has hitherto pursued, if he had been supported by a real assistance on the part of his allies. But having, from the separation of Austria and England, found himself reduced to his own resources, having to combat with his own means the immense military forces which France had at her disposal, he was authorised in believing that, in continuing to sacrifice himself for others, he might ultimately come to compromise the fate of his own empire. The conduct of the British government in later times has been of a kind completely to justify the determination which his Majesty has now taken. The diversion on the Continent which England so long promised, has not to this day taken place ; and even if, as the latest advices from London show, the British government has at length resolved on sending ten thousand men to Pomerania, that succour is noways proportioned either to the hopes we were authorised to entertain, or the importance of the object to which these troops were destined. Pecuniary succours might, in some degree, have compensated the want of English troops ; but not only did the British government decline facilitating the loan the Imperial court had intended to negotiate in London, but when it did at length resolve upon making some advances, it appeared that the sum destined for this purpose, so far from meeting the exigencies of the Allies, would not even have covered the indispensable expenses of Prussia. In fine, the use which, instead of co-operating in the common cause, the British government, during this period, has made of its forces in South America and in Egypt, the latter of which was not even communicated to the Imperial cabinet, and was entirely at variance with its interests, at a time when, by giving them a different destination, the necessity of maintaining a Russian army on the Danube might have been prevented, and the disposable force on the Vistula proportionally increased, sufficiently demonstrates that the Emperor of Russia was virtually released from his engagements, and had no course left but to attend to the security of his own dominions.” It is impossible to dispute the justice of these observations—*Note, GENERAL BUDBERG to LORD LEVESON GOWER, Tilsit, 30th June 1807 ; Parl. Deb. x. 111, 112.*

Violent irritation which it produced in Alexander.

* “When the present ministers came into office,” said Mr Canning, then Foreign Minister, on July 31, 1807, “they found the transport department totally dismantled. This originated in the economical system of Lord H. Petty ; but it was a false parsimony, evidently calculated, at no distant period, to render necessary a profuse expenditure. The mandate of dismissal came from the treasury, and was applicable to all transports but those necessary to maintain the communication with Ireland, Jersey, and Guernsey. The saving produced by this order did not amount to more than £4000 a-month, and it dispersed 60,000 tons of shipping which was left to the late ministry by their prede-

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1807.

5.

Negotiations
of Napoleon
during the
same period.
Auxiliary
forces ob-
tained under
Romana from
Spain.

While the Allies were thus drawing closer the bonds which united their confederacy, and England, rousing from its unworthy slumber, was preparing to resume its place at the head of the alliance, Napoleon on his side was not idle, and from his camp at Finkenstein carried on an active negotiation with all the powers in Europe. In his addresses to the French senate, calling out the additional conscription of eighty thousand men, which has been already mentioned, he publicly held out the olive branch; the surest proof of the magnitude of the disaster sustained at Eylau, and the critical situation in which he felt himself placed, with Austria hanging in dubious strength in his rear on one side, and Great Britain preparing to organise a formidable force on the other. "Our policy is fixed," said he: "we have offered to England peace before the fourth coalition; we repeat the offer: we are ready to conclude a treaty with Russia on the terms which her ambassador subscribed at Paris: we are prepared to restore its eight millions of inhabitants and its capital conquered by our arms to Prussia." There was nothing said now about making the Prussian nobility so poor that they should have to beg their bread; nor of the Queen, like another Helen, having lighted the fires of another Troy. But amidst these tardy and extorted expressions of moderation, the Emperor had nothing less at his heart than to come to an accommodation; and his indefatigable activity was incessantly engaged in strengthening his hands by fresh alliances, and collecting from all quarters additional troops to overwhelm his enemies. The imprudent and premature proclamation has been already mentioned,* by which the Prince of Peace announced,

cessors. Ministers thus, in the beginning of April last, had not a transport at their disposal; and from the active state of trade at the same time, it required several months before they could be collected. If they had existed, a military force would in that very month have been sent out, and twenty thousand British troops would have turned the scale at Friedland. This ill-judged economy was the more criminal, that, by having a fleet of transports constantly at command, and threatening various points, 20,000 men could easily paralyse three times that force on the part of the enemy. The Whigs had apparently parted with this transport force for no other purpose but that of registering their abandonment of the Continent." The facts here alleged, Mr Windham, on the part of the late government, did not deny, alleging only "*the absurdity of sending British forces to the Continent; which required no reply*"—a curious argument from so able a man, when it is recollected that the nation was on the verge of Wellington's career.—See *Parl. Deb.* ix. 1035-1038.

* *Ante*, Chap. xliii. § 19.

on the eve of the battle of Jena, his preparations to combat an enemy which no one could doubt was France. Napoleon dissembled for a while his resentment, but resolved to make this hostile demonstration the ground for demanding fresh supplies from Spain; and accordingly great numbers of the Prussian prisoners were sent into the Peninsula to be fed and clothed at the expense of the court of Madrid, while an auxiliary force was peremptorily demanded from that power to co-operate in the contest in the north of Europe. Trembling for its existence, the Spanish government had no alternative but submission; and accordingly sixteen thousand of the best troops of the monarchy, under a leader destined to future celebrity, the MARQUIS DE ROMANA, crossed the Pyrenees early in March, and arrived on the banks of the Elbe in the middle of May. Thus was the double object gained of obtaining an important auxiliary force for the Grand Army, and of securing, as hostages for the fidelity of the court of Madrid, the flower of its troops in a remote situation, entirely at the mercy of his forces.¹

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1807.

¹ Bign. vi.
239, 242.

Sweden was another power which Napoleon was not without hopes, notwithstanding the hostile disposition of its sovereign, of detaching, through dread of Russia, from the coalition. Immediately after the battle of Eylau he began to take measures to excite the court of Stockholm against the alliance.* “Should Swedish blood,” said he, in the bulletin on the 23d April, “flow for the defence of the Ottoman empire, or its ruin? should it be shed to establish the freedom of the seas, or to subvert it? What has Sweden to fear from France? Nothing. What from Russia? Every thing. A peace, or even a truce with Sweden, would accomplish the dearest wish of his Majesty’s heart, who has

6.
Operations in
Pomerania,
and views of
Napoleon
regarding
Sweden.

* In furtherance of this design, early in March he explained to Marshal Mortier, who was intrusted with the prosecution of the war in Pomerania, that the real object of hostilities in that quarter was not to take Stralsund, nor inflict any serious injury on Sweden, but to observe Hamburg and Berlin, and defend the mouths of the Oder. “I regret much what has already happened,” said he, “and most of all that the fine suburbs of Stralsund have been burned. It is not our interest to inflict injury on Sweden, but to protect that power from it. Hasten to propose an armistice to the governor of Stralsund, or even a suspension of arms, in order to lighten the sufferings of a war which I regard as criminal, because it is contrary to the real interests of that monarchy.”—72d Bulletin, *Camp. en Saxe et Pologne*, iv. 243-246.

March 5.

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XLVI.

1807.

April 3.

¹ Dum. xviii.
108, 117.
Bign. vi. 244,
245.

7.
Armistice be-
tween the
Swedes and
French.

always beheld with pain the hostilities in which he was engaged with a nation generous and brave, linked alike by its historic recollections and geographical position to the alliance with France." In pursuance of instructions framed on these principles, Mortier inclined with the bulk of his forces towards Colberg, to prosecute the siege of that town, leaving only General Grandjean with a weak division before Stralsund. Informed of that circumstance, General Essen, the governor of the fortress, conceived hopes of capturing or destroying the presumptuous commander who maintained a sort of blockade with a force so much inferior to that which was assembled within its walls. Early in April, accordingly, he issued from the fortress, and attacked the French with such superior numbers, that they were compelled to retire, first to Anclam, where they sustained a severe defeat, and ultimately to Stettin, with the loss of above two thousand men. No sooner did he hear of this check, than Mortier assembled the bulk of his troops, about fourteen thousand strong, under the cannon of that fortress, and prepared for a serious attack upon the enemy. The Swedes, though nearly equal in number, were not prepared for a conflict with forces so formidable, and retired to Stralsund with the loss of above a thousand prisoners, and three hundred killed and wounded: among the latter of whom was General Arnfeldt, the most uncompromising enemy of France in their councils.¹

After this repulse, Mortier renewed his secret proposals for a separate accommodation to the Swedish generals; and on this occasion he found them more inclined to enter into his views. The Swedish government at this period was actuated by a strong feeling of irritation towards Great Britain for the long delay which had occurred, under the administration of the Whigs, in the remittance of the stipulated subsidies; and its generals at Stralsund were ignorant of the steps which were in progress, since the change of ministry in England, to remedy the defect. Deeming themselves, therefore, deserted by their natural allies, and left alone to sustain a contest in which they had only a subordinate interest, they lent a willing ear to Mortier's proposals, and con-

cluded an armistice, by which it was stipulated that hostilities should cease between the two armies—that the islands of Usidom and Wollin should be occupied by the French troops—the lines of the Peene and the Trebel separate the two armies—no succours, direct or indirect, should be forwarded through the Swedish lines either to Dantzic or Colberg—and no debarkation of troops hostile to France take place at Stralsund.* The armistice was not to be broken without ten days' previous notice, which period was, by a supplementary convention on the 29th April, extended to a month. No sooner was this last agreement signed, than Mortier in person resumed the blockade of Colberg, while a large part of his forces was despatched to aid Lefebvre in the operations against Dantzic, and took an important part in the siege of that fortress, and the brief but decisive campaign which immediately ensued. The conditions of the new treaty between England and Sweden, signed at London on the 17th June, came too late to remedy these serious evils; and thus, while the previous ill-timed defection of the cabinet of London from the great confederacy for the deliverance of Europe, had sown the seeds of irreconcilable enmity in the breast of the Emperor Alexander, it entirely paralysed the valuable array in the rear of Napoleon, which, if thrown into the scale at the decisive moment, and with the support of a powerful British auxiliary force, could not have failed to have had the most important effects, both upon the movements of Austria and the general issue of the campaign.¹

¹ Dum. xviii.
118, 121.
Bign. vi. 245,
246. Jom. ii.
388, 392.

* In the letter of Napoleon, which Mortier despatched to Essen on that occasion, he said,—“ I have nothing more at heart than to re-establish peace with Sweden. Political passion may have divided us; but state interest, which ought to rule the determinations of sovereigns, should reunite our policy. Sweden cannot be ignorant that, in the present contest, she is as much interested in the success of our arms as France itself. She will speedily feel the consequence of Russian aggrandisement. Is it for the destruction of the empire of Constantinople that the Swedes are fighting? Sweden is not less interested than France in the diminution of the enormous maritime power of England. Accustomed by the traditions of our fathers to regard each other as friends, our bonds are drawn closer together by the partition of Poland and the dangers of the Ottoman empire; our political interests are the same; why, then, are we at variance?” And in the event of the Swedish general acceding to these propositions, the instructions of Mortier were—“ instantly to send to Dantzic and Thorn all the regiments of foot and horse which can be spared; to resume without delay the siege of Colberg, and at the same time to hold himself in readiness to start with the whole blockading force, at a moment's warning, either for the Vistula or the Elbe.”—JOMINI, 389, 391.

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XLVI.

1807.

8.

Sweden again
reverts to the
alliance.

In justice to the Swedish monarch, however, who, though eccentric and rash, was animated with the highest and most romantic principles of honour, it must be noticed, that no sooner was he informed of the change of policy on the part of the cabinet of London, consequent on the accession of the new administration, and even before the conclusion of the treaty of 17th June, by which efficacious succours were at length promised on the part of Great Britain, than he manifested the firm resolution to abide by the confederacy, and even pointed to the restoration of the Bourbons as the condition on which alone peace appeared practicable to Europe, or a curb could be imposed on the ambition of France. Early in June he wrote to the King of Prussia with these views, and soon after refused to ratify the convention of 29th April for the extension of the period allowed for the denouncing the armistice with France, in a conversation with Marshal Brune, successor to Mortier; so curious and characteristic as to deserve a place in general history.*

9.
Formation of
an army of
reserve on the
Elbe.

Not content with thus drawing to the northern contest the troops of the monarchy of Charles V., and neutralising the whole forces of Sweden and the important *point d'appui* for British co-operation in his rear, Napoleon, at the same time, directed the formation of a new and respectable army on the banks of the Elbe. The change of ministry in England had led him to expect a much more vigorous prosecution of the war by that power; the descent of a large body of English troops in the north of Germany was known to be in contemplation; and

* "Nothing," said he, in his letter of 2d June to the King of Prussia, "would gratify me more than to be able to contribute with you to the establishment of general order and the independence of Europe; but to attain that end, I think a public declaration should be made in favour of the legitimate cause of the Bourbons, by openly espousing their interest, which is plainly that of all established governments. My opinion on this point is fixed and unalterable, as well as on the events which are passing before our eyes." And two days afterwards, the following conversation passed between the King of Sweden and Marshal Brune:—"Do you forget, Marshal, that you have a lawful sovereign, though he is now in misfortune?"—"I know that he exists," replied the Marshal.—"He is exiled," rejoined the King; "he is unfortunate; his rights are sacred; he desires only to see Frenchmen around that standard."—"Where is that standard?"—"You will find it wherever mine is raised."—"Your Majesty then regards the Pretender as your brother?"—"The French should know their duties without waiting till I set them an example."—"Will your Majesty then consent to the notification of ten days before breaking the armistice?"—"Yes."—"But if a month should be secretly agreed on——"—"You know me little, if you deem me capable of such a deception."—See HARD. ix. 411, 412; and DUM. xix. 139.

with his advanced and critical position in Poland, the preservation of his long line of communication with France was an object of vital importance. To counteract any such attempt as might threaten it, two French divisions, under Boudet and Molitor, were summoned from Italy, and, united with Romana's corps of Spaniards and the Dutch troops with which Louis Buonaparte had effected the reduction of the fortresses of Hanover, formed an army of observation on the Elbe, which it was hoped would be sufficient at once to avert any danger in that quarter, overawe Hamburg and Berlin, and keep up the important communications of the Grand Army with the banks of the Rhine.¹

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1807.

¹ Jom. ii.
393, 394.

With a view still further to strengthen himself in the formidable contest which he foresaw was approaching, Napoleon, from his headquarters at Finkenstein, opened negotiations both with Turkey and Persia, in the hope of rousing those irreconcilable enemies of the Muscovite empire to a powerful diversion in his favour on the Danube and the Caucasus. Early in March a magnificent embassy was received by the Emperor at Warsaw, both from the Sublime Porte and the King of Persia. A treaty, offensive and defensive, was speedily concluded between the courts of Paris and Teheran, by which mutual aid and succour was stipulated by the two contracting parties; and the better to consolidate their relations, and turn to useful account the military resources of the Persian monarchy, it was agreed that a Persian legation should reside at Paris, and General Gardanne, accompanied by a body of skilful engineers, set out for the distant capital of Teheran. Napoleon received the Turkish ambassador, who represented a power whose forces might more immediately affect the issue of the combat, with the utmost distinction, and lavished on him the most flattering expressions of regard. In a public audience given to that functionary at Warsaw on the 28th May, he said, "that his right hand was not more inseparable from his left than the Sultaun Selim should ever be to him." Memorable words! and highly characteristic of the Emperor, when his total desertion of that potentate in two months afterwards, by the treaty of Tilsit, is taken into consideration. In pursuance, however, of his design, at

10.
Negotiations
with Turkey
and Persia by
Napoleon.

May 7.

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1807.

¹ Corr. Nav.
de Napoleon,
ii. 117. Bour.
vii. 281, 282.
Ann. Reg.
1807. Bign.
vi. 246, 251.

that time at least sincerely conceived, of engaging Turkey and Persia in active hostilities with Russia, he wrote to the Minister of Marine:—"The Emperor of Persia has requested four thousand men, ten thousand muskets, and fifty pieces of cannon—when can they be embarked, and from whence? They would form a rallying point, give consistency to eighty thousand horse, and would force the Russians to a considerable diversion. Send me without delay a memoir on the best means of fitting out an expedition to Persia." At the same time he conceived the idea of maritime operations in the Black Sea, in conjunction with the Ottoman fleet; and in a long letter to the Minister of Marine enumerated all the naval forces at his disposal and on the stocks, in order to impress him with the facility with which a powerful squadron might be sent to the Bosphorus, in order to co-operate in an attack upon Sebastopol.¹

11.
Preparations
for aiding
them by land.

Still more extensive operations were in contemplation with land forces. Orders were sent to Marmont to prepare for the transmission of twenty-five thousand men across the northern provinces of Turkey to the Danube; and a formal application was made at Constantinople for liberty to march them through Bosnia, Macedonia, and Bulgaria. In these great designs, especially the mission of General Gardanne to the court of Teheran, more important objects than even a diversion to the war in Poland, vital as it was to his interests, were in the contemplation of the Emperor. The appearance of the ambassadors of Turkey and Persia at his headquarters when five hundred leagues from Paris, on the road to Asia, had strongly excited his imagination; his early visions of Oriental conquest were revived, and the project was already far advanced to maturity, of striking, through Persia, a mortal stroke at England in her Indian possessions.

12.
Jealousy ex-
cited in the
Divan by the
summoning
of Parga.

These extensive projects, however, which the rapid succession of events on the Vistula prevented from being carried into execution, were wellnigh interrupted by a precipitate and ill-timed step on the part of the governor of the Ionian Islands, Cæsar Berthier. The consent of the Divan had just been given to the march of the French troops across the northern provinces of the

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empire, when intelligence was received that the towns of Parga, Previso, and Butrin, on the coast of the Adriatic, though then in the possession of the Turks, had been summoned in the most peremptory manner by that officer as dependencies of the Venetian States, out of which the modern Republic of the Seven Islands had been framed, with the threat to employ force if they were not immediately surrendered. This intelligence excited the utmost alarm at Constantinople; the Turks recollected the perfidious attack which, under the mask of friendship, the French had made on their valuable possessions in Egypt, and anticipated a similar seizure of their European dominions from the force for which entrance was sought on the footing of forwarding succours to the Danube. Napoleon, though this step was taken in pursuance of orders emanating from himself, expressed the utmost dissatisfaction at their literal execution at so untimely a crisis; the governor was recalled, and the utmost protestations of friendship for the Sultaun made. But the evil was done, and was irreparable: Turkish honesty had conceived serious suspicions of French fidelity; the passage of the troops was refused, and the foundation laid of that well-founded distrust which, confirmed by Napoleon's desertion of their interests in the treaty of Tilsit, subsequently led to the conclusion of a separate peace by the Osmanlis with Russia in 1812, and the horrors of the Beresina to the Grand Army.¹

May 29.

¹ Bign. vi.
248, 250.

A nearer and more efficacious ally was presented to Napoleon in the Polish provinces. The continuance of the war in their neighbourhood, the sight of the Russian prisoners, the certainty of the advance of the French troops, and the exaggerated reports every where diffused of their successes, had, notwithstanding the measured reserve of his language, excited the utmost enthusiasm for the French Emperor in the gallant inhabitants of that ill-fated monarchy. Of this disposition, so far as it could be done without embroiling him with Austria, he resolved to take advantage. His policy towards that country uniformly had been, to derive the utmost aid from the military spirit of its subjects which could be obtained, without openly proclaiming its independence,

13.
Measures to
organise the
military
strength of
Polan

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March 12.

April 6.

May 16.

May 27.

June 4.

¹ Bign vi.
252, 253.14.
Winter
quarters of
the French
army.

and thereby irrevocably embroiling him with the partitioning powers. In addition to the Polish forces organised under former decrees, and which now amounted to above twenty thousand men, he took into his pay a regiment of light horse raised by Prince John Sulkowski; subsequently decreed the formation of a Polish-Italian legion, and the incorporation of one of their regiments of hussars with his Guards; and authorised the provisional government at Warsaw to dispose of royal domains in Polish Prussia to the extent of eighteen millions of francs, and Prussian stock to the extent of six millions. His cautious policy, however, shortly after appeared in a decree, by which the commissary-general at Warsaw was enjoined to limit his requisitions to the territory described by the original decree establishing his powers, which confined them to Prussian Poland. By these means, though he avoided giving any direct encouragement to rebellion in the Russian and Austrian provinces of the partitioned territory, he succeeded in generally diffusing an enthusiastic spirit, which, before the campaign opened, had brought above thirty thousand gallant recruits to his standards. This disposition was strongly increased by two decrees which appeared early in June, on the eve of the resumption of hostilities,—by the first of which Prince Poniatowski was reinstated in a starosty, or government, of which he had been dispossessed by the Prussian cabinet; while, by the second, the provisional government at Warsaw was directed to set apart twenty millions of francs (£800,000) as a fund to recompense those who should distinguish themselves in the approaching campaign.¹

The headquarters of Napoleon, in the first instance, had been fixed at Osterode, on the margin of one of the lakes which form the feeders of the Drewentz; but, on the representations of the learned and humane Larrey, that that situation was low and unhealthy for the troops, he moved to Finkenstein, where all the important negotiations which ensued during the cessation of active hostilities were conducted. The Guard were disposed around the Emperor's residence; and not only that select corps, but the whole army, were lodged in a more comfortable manner than could have been anticipated in that severe

climate. After a sharp conflict in the end of February, the important fortified post of Braunsberg, at the entrance of the river Passarge into the Frisch-Haff See, was wrested from the Prussians by Bernadotte, and the *tête-du-pont* there established secured all the left of the army from the incursions of the enemy. On the left bank of that river no less than four corps of the army were cantoned, while all the passes over it were occupied in such strength as to render any attempt at a surprise impossible. Secure behind this protecting screen, the French army constructed comfortable huts for their winter quarters, and all the admirable arrangements of the camp at Boulogne were again put in force amidst the severity of a Polish winter. The streets in which they were disposed, resembled in regularity and cleanliness those of a metropolis. Constant exercises, rural labours, warlike games, and reviews, both confirmed the health and diverted the minds of the soldiers; while the inexhaustible agricultural riches of Old Prussia kept even the enormous multitude, which was concentrated within a space of twenty leagues, amply supplied with provisions. Immense convoys constantly defiling on all the roads from the Rhine, Silesia, and the Elbe, provided all that was necessary for warlike operations; while the numerous conscripts, both from France and the allied states, and the great numbers of wounded and sick who on the return of spring were discharged from the hospitals, both swelled the ranks and reassured the minds of the soldiers. The magnitude of the requisitions by which these ample supplies were obtained, and the inflexible severity with which they were levied from the conquered states, was indeed spreading the seeds of inextinguishable animosity in his rear. But the effects of that feeling were remote and contingent, the present benefits certain and immediate; and the Russians had too much reason to feel their importance in the numbers and incomparable discipline of the troops by whom they were assailed upon the opening of the campaign.¹

The Russian army was far from being equally well situated, and the resources at its disposal were by no means commensurate to those which were in possession

¹ Dum. xviii. 75, 85, 206, 207; and xix. 436, 442. Wilson, 118.

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15.

Winter
quarters of
the Russians.
Combat of
Guttstadt.
March 3.

March 23.

¹ Dum. xviii.
86, 91, 203,
207. Wilson,
122, 133.

of the French Emperor. The bulk of the Allied army was cantoned between the Passarge and the Alle, around Heilsberg, where a formidable intrenched camp had been constructed. The only contest of any moment which took place while the army occupied this position, was in the beginning of March at Guttstadt, which was attacked and carried by Marshal Ney, with the magazines which it contained; but the French troops having imprudently advanced into the plain beyond that town, several regiments were surrounded by the Cossacks, pierced through and broken; so that both parties were glad to resume their quarters without boasting of any considerable advantage. Headquarters were at Bartenstein, and the advanced posts approached to those of Marshal Ney, on the right bank of the Passarge. Their cantonments, with the great commercial city of Königsberg in their rear, were very comfortable, and the army was daily receiving important accessions of strength from the sick and wounded who were leaving the hospitals. Thirty thousand fresh troops also, including the Grand-duke Constantine with the remainder of the Guard, and several batteries of light artillery, joined the army while they lay in their winter quarters; and in the end of March the Emperor Alexander left St Petersburg and arrived at Bartenstein, where the King of Prussia had already taken up his headquarters, and where the imperial and royal courts were established. But although the Russian and Prussian governments both made the utmost efforts to recruit their forces and bring up supplies from their rear, yet the succour which they were enabled to draw from their exhausted provinces was very different from what Napoleon extracted from the opulent German states which he held in subjection; and the additions to the respective forces which the cessation of hostilities secured, were in consequence widely different. Now was seen how immense was the advantage which the French Emperor had gained by having overrun and turned to his own account the richest part of Europe; as well as the magnitude of the error which the British government had committed, in refusing to the northern powers, now reduced to their own resources,¹ and with

nine-tenths of Prussia in the hands of the enemy, the supplies by which alone they could be expected to maintain the contest.*

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During the pause in military operations which took place for the three succeeding months, the active mind of Napoleon resumed the projects which he had formed for the internal amelioration of his immense empire. Early in March he wrote to the Minister of the Interior as to the expedience of granting a loan, without interest, to the mercantile classes who were labouring under distress, on the footing of advancing one half of the value of the goods they could give security over; and he announced his design of establishing a great bank in connexion with the state for the purpose of lending sums to manufacturers or merchants in difficulties, on the security of their unsold property. Orders were sent to the French ambassadors at the courts of Madrid and Constantinople, to use their endeavours to obtain the removal of certain restrictions which existed on French manufactures, and which, in the mortal commercial struggle between France and England, it might be of importance to have recalled. The bridge recently built in front of the Champ-de-Mars, received the name of Jena—an appellation destined to bring that beautiful structure to the verge of destruction in future times; a statue was ordered to be erected to D'Alembert, in the hall of the Institute;¹ the prize formerly promised to the ablest treatise on galvanism, was directed to be paid to the author who had deserved

16.
Great designs
of Napoleon
at this time
for the in-
terior of his
empire.
March 7.

April 14:

March 17.
May 7.
April 19.
¹ Bign. vi.
257, 264.

* While occupying these cantonments, a truce in hostilities, as usual in such cases, took place between the advanced posts of the two armies, and this led to an incident equally characteristic of the gallantry and honourable feelings of both. The Russian and French outposts being stationed on the opposite banks of a river, some firing, contrary to the usual custom, took place, and a French officer advancing, reproached the Russians with the discharge, and a Russian officer approaching him, requested him to stop the firing of his people, in order that, if necessary, they might determine by single combat who was most courageous. The officer assented, and was in the act of commanding his men to cease firing, when a ball pierced him to the heart. The Russian officer instantly rushed forward, and cried out to the French soldiers—"My life shall make reparation for this accident—let three marksmen fire at me as I stand here;" and turning to his own soldiers, ordered them "to cease firing upon the enemy, whatever might be his fate, unless they attempted to cross the river." Already a Frenchman had levelled his piece, when the subaltern next in command struck it down with his sword, and, running to the Russian, took him by the hand, declaring that no man worthy of the name of Frenchman would be the executioner of so brave a man. His soldiers felt the justice of the sentiment, and confirmed the feeling by a general acclamation.—See WILSON, 120. With truth did Montesquieu say, that honour was, under a monarchical government, the prevailing feeling of mankind.

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it; the important and difficult subject of the liberty of the press occupied his serious thoughts, and engrossed much of his correspondence with the Minister of the Interior.*

17.
And for political improvements.

June 4.
March 24.

His projects for political improvements were still more important. The project for establishing a university for literary and political information, was discussed;† a prize of twelve thousand francs (£480) announced for the best treatise on the means of curing the croup, which at that period was committing very serious ravages on the infants of France, and of which the child of the Queen of Holland had recently died; a daily correspondence was carried on with the Minister of Finance, and long calculations, often erroneous, but always intended to support an ingenious opinion, transmitted to test the accuracy and stimulate the activity of the functionaries

* “An effective mode of encouraging literature,” said Napoleon, “would be to establish a journal, of which the criticism is enlightened, actuated by good intentions, and free of that coarse brutality which characterises the existing newspapers, and is so contrary to the true interests of the nation. Journals now never criticise with the intention of repressing mediocrity, guiding inexperience, or encouraging rising merit; all their endeavour is to wither, to destroy. I am not insensible to the danger, that in avoiding one rock you may strike upon another. It may doubtless happen, that if they dare not criticise, they may fall into the still greater abuse of indiscriminate panegyric; and that the authors of those books with which the world is inundated, seeing themselves praised in journals which all are obliged to read, should believe themselves heaven-born geniuses, and, by the facility of their triumphs, encourage still more despicable imitation. Articles should be selected for the journals where reasoning is mingled with eloquence; where praise for deserved merit is tempered with censure for faults. Merit, however inconsiderable, should be sought for and rewarded. A young man who has written an ode worthy of praise, and which has attracted the notice of the minister, has already emerged from obscurity; the public is fixed; it is his part to do the rest.”—*NAPOLÉON'S Letter, 19th April 1807, to the Minister of the Interior*; BIGNON, vi. 262, 264.

† “You should occupy yourself with the project of establishing a university for literature, understanding by that word, not merely the belles-lettres, but history and geography. It should consist of at least thirty chairs, so linked together as to exhibit a living picture of instruction and direction, where every one who wishes to study a particular age should know at once whom to consult, what books, monuments, or chronicles to examine; where every one who wishes to travel should know where to receive positive instructions, both as to the government, literature, and physical productions of the country which he is about to visit. It is a lamentable truth, that in this great country a young man who wishes to study, or is desirous of signalling himself in any department, is obliged for long to grope in the dark, and literally lose years in fruitless researches before he discovers the true repositories of the information for which he seeks. It is a lamentable fact, that in this great country we have no depot for the preservation of knowledge, on the situation, government, and present state of different portions of the globe; but the student must have recourse either to the office of Foreign Affairs, where the collections are far from complete, or to the office of the Minister of Marine, where he will with difficulty find any one who knows any thing of what is asked. I desire such institutions; they have long formed the subject of my meditation, because in the course of my various labours I have repeatedly experienced their want.”—*NAPOLÉON to Minister of Interior, 19th April 1807*; BIGNON, vi. 267, 269.

in that important department.* In that department the great improvement of keeping accounts by double entry was adopted from the example of commerce, first by the recommendation of the Emperor, and, after its advantages had been fully demonstrated by experience, formally enforced by a decree of the government. Nor, amidst weightier cares, were the fine arts neglected; the designs for the Temple of Glory, ordered by the decree of 9th November from Posen, were submitted to the Emperor's consideration, and that one selected which has since been realised in the beautiful peristyle of the Madeleine; while all the departments of France were ordered to be searched for quarries of granite and marble capable of furnishing materials of durability and elegance for its interior decorations, worthy of a monument designed for immortal duration.¹ †

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Jan. 8, 1808.

¹ Bign. vi.
277, 278.

* "The good order which you have established in the affairs of the treasury, and the emancipation which you have effected of its operations from the control of bankers, is an advantage of the most important kind, which will eminently redound to the benefit of our commerce and manufactures."—*NAPOLÉON to the Minister of Finance, Osterode, 24th March 1807.* In truth, however, what the Emperor here called the emancipation of the treasury from the bankers, arose not so much from the regulations of the minister of that department, as from the extraneous sources from whence the chief supplies for the army were now derived, and which rendered the anticipation of revenue by discounting long-dated treasury bills at the bank of France unnecessary. He admitted this himself in the same letter—"I am now discharging the arrears of the army from the beginning of October 1806, to the end of February 1807; we shall see hereafter how this will be arranged with the treasury; *in the mean time, the payment comes from Prussia*, and that will put us greatly at ease." The pay thus extracted from the conquered states amounted to the enormous sum of 3,300,000 francs, or £132,000 a-month, supposing 150,000 men only so maintained, which for these five months alone was no less than 16,500,000 francs, or £660,000 sterling.—See *BIGNON*, iv. 274, 276.

† "After having attentively considered," said Napoleon, "the different plans submitted to my examination, I have not felt the smallest doubt on that which I should adopt. That of M. Vignon alone fulfils my wishes. It is a temple which I desire, and not a church. What could you erect as a church which could keep its ground against the Pantheon, Notre-Dame, or, above all, St Peter's at Rome? Every thing in the temple should be in a chaste, severe, and durable style; it should be fitted for solemnities at all times, at all hours; the imperial throne should be a curule chair of marble, seats of marble for the persons invited, an amphitheatre of marble for the performers. No furniture should be admitted but cushions for the seats; all should be of granite, of marble, and of iron. With this view, searches should be made in all the provinces for quarries of marble and granite. They will be useful, not merely for this monument, but for others, which I have it in view to construct at future times, and which by their nature will require thirty, forty, or fifty years for their construction. Not more than 3,000,000 of francs (£120,000) should be required, the temples of Athens having not cost much more than the half of that sum; fifteen millions have been absorbed, I know not how, in the Pantheon, but I should not object to an expenditure of five or six millions for the construction of a temple worthy of the first city of the world."—*NAPOLÉON to the Minister of the Interior, Finkinstein, 18th April 1807*; *BIGN.* vi. 270, 272. It was from this determination of the Emperor that the present exquisite structure of the Madeleine took its rise; but his real design in the formation, on so durable and gigantic a scale, of this noble monument was, as already mentioned, still

Napoleon fixes
on a design for
the Madeleine
at Paris.

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18.
Finance of
France dur-
ing this year.

¹ Gaeta, i.
305.

² Daru's
Report.
Dum. xix.
464. Pièces
Just.

³ Jom. ii.
437.

The official exposition of the finances of France during this year exhibited the most flattering prospect in the accounts published; but the picture was entirely fallacious, so far as the total expenditure was concerned, because a large portion of the supplies were drawn by war contributions from foreign states, and more than half the army was quartered for all its expenses on the vanquished territories. The revenue of the empire as presented in the budget, amounted to 683,057,933 francs, or £27,318,000, and its expenditure to 777,850,000 francs, or £31,106,000.¹ But the Emperor did not reveal to the public what was nevertheless true, that the contributions levied on the countries lying between the Rhine and the Vistula, between the 14th October 1806, when the war commenced, and the 14th June 1807, when it terminated, amounted to the enormous, and, if not proved by authentic documents, incredible sum of 604,227,922 francs, or £24,220,000; that above a million annually was extracted from the kingdom of Italy;² that the arrears paid up by Austria for the great war contribution of 1805 were double that sum; that the war subsidies extracted from Spain and Portugal, in virtue of the treaty of St Ildefonso, were above £3,000,000 yearly; finally, that the Grand Army, two hundred thousand strong, had, since it broke up from the heights of Boulogne, in September 1805, been exclusively fed, clothed, lodged, and paid at the expense of the German states.³ The revenues of France, therefore, did not furnish more than half the total sum required by the expensive and gigantic military establishment of the Emperor; while its inhabitants received almost the whole benefit from its expenditure: a state of things which at once explains the necessity under which he lay of continually advancing to fresh conquests; the extraordinary attachment which the French so long felt to his government; the vast internal prosperity with which it was attended, and the grinding misery, as well as the

more extensive than the honour of the Grand Army; and he in secret intended it as an expiatory monument to Louis XVI., Marie Antoinette, and the other victims of the Revolution.—*Vide Ante*, Chap. xliv. § 17, *note*; and LAS CAS. i. 370, 371.

inextinguishable hatred, with which it soon came to be regarded in foreign states.*

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Early in March, a grand convocation of the Jews assembled in Paris, in pursuance of the commands of Napoleon, issued in the July preceding. Seventy-one doctors and chiefs of that ancient nation attended this great assembly; the first meeting of the kind which had occurred since the dispersion of the Israelites on the capture of Jerusalem. For seventeen hundred years the children of Israel had sojourned as strangers in foreign realms; reviled, oppressed, persecuted, without a capital, without a government, without a home; far from the tombs of their forefathers, banished from the land of their ancestors; but preserving unimpaired, amidst all their calamities, their traditions, their usages, their faith; exhibiting in every nation of the earth a lasting miracle to attest the verity of the Christian prophecies. On this occasion the great Sanhedrim, or assembly, published the result of their deliberations in a variety of statutes and

19.
Statutes of
the Grand
Sanhedrin of
the Jews at
Paris.
March 9.

* The receipts and expenditure of France, as exhibited in the Budget of the Minister of Finance for this year, were as follows:—

<i>Receipt.</i>				Receipts and expenditure of the year.
	Francs.			
Direct Taxes,	311,840,685	or	£12,500,000	
Register and Crown Lands,	172,227,000		6,900,000	
Customs,	90,115,726		3,600,000	
Lottery,	12,233,837		480,000	
Post-Office,	9,968,134		400,000	
Excise,	75,808,358		3,032,000	
Salt and tobacco,	6,900,000		276,000	
Salt Mines of Government,	3,230,000		130,000	
	682,323,740		£27,318,000	
<i>Expenditure.</i>				
	Francs.			
Public Debt,	105,959,000	or	£4,240,000	
Civil List,	28,000,000		1,120,000	
Public Justice,	22,042,000		880,000	
Foreign Ministers,	10,379,000		420,000	
Interior do.,	54,902,000		2,200,000	
Finance do.,	25,624,000		1,025,000	
Public Treasury,	8,571,000		343,000	
War,	195,895,000		7,850,000	
Ordnance,	147,654,000		5,900,000	
Marine,	117,307,000		4,700,000	
Public Worship,	12,342,000		490,000	
General Police,	708,000		28,000	
Roads and Bridges,	38,215,000		1,500,000	
Incidental Charges,	10,252,000		410,000	
	777,850,000		£31,106,000	

But as the Grand Army, 200,000 strong, was solely maintained, paid, and

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¹ D'Abr. ix.
218. Bign. vi.
269, 270.

declarations, calculated to remove from the Israelites a portion of that odium under which they had so long laboured in all the nations of Christendom; and Napoleon, in return, took them under his protection, and, under certain modifications, admitted them to the privileges of his empire.¹

20.
Reflections
on this event.

This first approach to a reunion and settlement of the Jews, impossible under any other circumstances but the rule of so great a conqueror as Napoleon, is very remarkable. The immediate cause of it, doubtless, was the desire of the Emperor to secure the support of so numerous and opulent a body as the Jews of Old Prussia, Poland, and the southern provinces of Russia, which was of great importance in the contest in which he was engaged; but it is impossible not to see in its result a step in the development of Christian prophecy. And thus, from the mysterious manner in which the wisdom of Providence makes the wickedness and passions of men to work out its great designs for the government of human affairs, did the French Revolution, which, nursed in infidelity and crime, set out with the abolition of Christian worship, and the open denial of God by a whole nation, in its secondary results lead to the first

equipped at the expenses of Germany, this table exhibited a most fallacious view of the real expenditure and receipts of Napoleon during the year. Without mentioning lesser contributions, the following table exhibits the enormous sums which, by public or private plunder, for it deserves no better name, he was enabled, during the same period, to extract from the tributary or conquered states, and their application to the expenses of the war or otherwise:—

Receipts.

	Francs.	
War contribution levied on Germany from October 1806, to July 1807,	604,227,922	or £24,200,000
Tribute from Italy,	30,000,000	1,200,000
— from Spain,	72,000,000	2,880,000
— from Portugal,	16,000,000	640,000
War contribution from Austria, arrears of 1805,	50,000,000	2,000,000
	<u>772,227,922</u>	<u>or £30,920,000</u>

Expenditure.

	Francs.	
Cost of the Grand Army from October 1806, to July 1807,	228,944,363	or £9,160,000
Leaving of plunder levied to be applied to internal service of France in this or succeeding years,	543,282,559	21,760,000
	<u>772,226,922</u>	<u>or £30,920,000</u>

—DARU'S *Report of the Finances of 1806*; DUM. xix. 464, 465; BIGN. vii. 279, 280; GAETA, i. 305.

great step which had occurred in modern Europe to the reassembling of the Jews, so early foretold by our Saviour. And it will appear in the sequel that in its ultimate effects it is destined, to all human appearance, by the irresistible strength which it has given to the British navy, and the vast impulse which it has communicated to the Russian army, to lead to the wresting of Jerusalem from the hands of the infidels, and the spread of the Christian faith alike over the forests of the New and the deserts of the Old World.

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The two grand armies, in their respective positions on the Passarge and the Alle, remained for nearly four months after the sanguinary fight at Eylau in a state of tranquillity, interrupted only by skirmishes at the outposts, followed by no material results, and too inconsiderable to deserve the attention of the general historian. Both parties were actively engaged in measures to repair the wide chasms which that conflict had occasioned in their ranks, and preparing for the coming struggle which was to decide the great contest for the empire of Europe. But Napoleon felt too strongly the imminent risk which he had run of total ruin by a defeat on the frontiers of Russia, before the fortresses in his rear were all subdued, to incur it a second time, until his right flank was secured by the reduction of the remainder of the powerful chain of strongholds in Silesia, which still hoisted the Prussian colours, and his left by the surrender of the great fortified emporium of Dantzic. To these two objects accordingly his attention was directed during the cessation of active hostilities in the front of the Grand Army; and his operations in these quarters were not only great in themselves, but had the most important effect upon the future fortunes of the campaign.¹

21.
Sieges in
Silesia during
the interval
of hostilities.

¹ Jom. ii. 399.
Dum. xviii.
86, 87.

Schweidnitz and Neiss were invested about the same time, in the end of January; but serious operations were not attempted against the latter fortress, which was the chief stronghold of the province, till the former was reduced. The siege of Schweidnitz accordingly was carried on with great activity, and with such success, that it capitulated after a feeble resistance, in the middle of February. The reduction of the capital of Silesia was of the highest importance, not merely as putting at the

22.
Fall of
Schweidnitz.

Feb. 17.

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¹ Marten's
Sup. 417.
Dum. xviii.
98, 99. Jom.
ii. 399.

disposal of Napoleon a powerful fortress, commanding a rich territory, but giving him a supply of extensive stores in ammunition and artillery, which were forthwith forwarded to Dantzic and Neiss, and proved of the utmost service in the sieges of both these towns. The resources of the province, now almost entirely in the hands of Vandamme, were turned to the very best account by that indefatigable and rapacious commander. Heavy requisitions for horses, provisions, and forage, followed each other in rapid succession; besides grievous contributions in money, which were so considerable, and levied with such severity on that opulent province, that before the end of March 1,500,000 francs (£60,000) were regularly transmitted once *a-week* to the headquarters of Napoleon, and this plentiful supply continued undiminished till the end of the war.¹

23.
Of Neiss.

April 20.

No sooner was the besieging force before Neiss strengthened by the artillery and reinforcements which were forwarded from Schweidnitz, than the operations of the French for its reduction were conducted with more activity. This fortress, originally situated exclusively on the right bank of the river which bears the same name, was extended by Frederick the Great to the left bank, where the principal arsenals and military establishments were placed. The works surrounding the whole were extensive, though in some places not entirely armed or clothed with masonry; but a garrison of six thousand men, great part of which occupied an intrenched camp without the fortress, promised to present a formidable resistance. Finding, however, that the trenches had been opened, and that the place was hard pressed, an attempt to relieve it was made by General Kleist with four thousand men, drawn from the garrison of Glatz. Their efforts, which took place on the night of the 20th, were combined with a vigorous sortie from the walls of the place; but though the attack at first was attended with some success, it was finally defeated by the opportune arrival of Jerome Buonaparte with a powerful reinforcement, who had received intelligence of the projected operation, and came up in time to render it totally abortive. The defeated troops took refuge in Glatz, after sustaining a loss of seven hundred men. Immediately after, the

bombardment was resumed with fresh vigour ; the town was repeatedly set on fire in many different places ; the outwork of the Blockhausen was carried by assault ; already the rampart was beginning to be shaken by the breaching batteries ; and the explosion of one of their magazines spread consternation through the garrison, when the governor offered to capitulate on the same conditions as the other fortresses of Prussia. This offer was agreed to ; and on the 16th June, this great stronghold, with three hundred and twenty pieces of cannon, two hundred thousand pounds of powder, a garrison still above five thousand strong, but entirely destitute of provisions, fell into the hands of the enemy.¹

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June 1.

¹ Dum. xviii.
100, 105.
Jom. ii. 399.

Glatz alone remained to complete the reduction of the province, and it did not long survive its unfortunate companions. Prince Jerome commanded the attacking force, and though the garrison was numerous, it was so much discouraged by the bad success of the besieged in all the other fortresses of the province, that it made but a feeble resistance. The intrenched camp which communicated with the town having been attacked and carried, this last stronghold of Silesia capitulated on the 14th June, the very day when the battle of Friedland was fought. Thus were all the fortresses of this province, so long the bulwark of Prussia, reduced by a force hardly equal to the united strength of their garrisons ; and Vandamme, with a corps not exceeding twenty-five thousand men, had the glory of wresting from the enemy six first-rate fortified towns containing above twelve hundred pieces of cannon. The defence which they made did little credit to the Prussian arms, as not one of them had resolution enough to stand an assault, and almost all lowered their colours while the rampart was still unbreached.²

24.
And of Glatz.

June 14.

² Dum. xviii.
105, 106.
Jom. ii. 399.

The siege of Dantzic was an operation of more difficulty, and of much more immediate influence upon the fate of the campaign. Napoleon felt the imminent danger which he would have run if Benningsen's army, during the irruption which preceded the battle of Eylau, had succeeded in throwing a powerful reinforcement into that fortress. Thirty thousand men, resting on its formidable ramparts, and amply supplied with every necessary from the sea, would have paralysed all the movements of the

25.
Siege of
Dantzic.
Description
of that for-
tress.

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¹ Dum. xviii.
124, 125.
Jom. ii. 307.

26.
State of its
fortifications.

² Dum. xviii.
124, 126, 141.
Jom. ii. 397.
Ann. Reg.
1807, 23.

Grand Army. This important city, formerly one of the most flourishing of the Hanse Towns, had fallen to the lot of Prussia on occasion of the last partition of Poland in 1794; and though it had much declined in wealth and population since the disastrous era when it lost its independence, yet it was still a place of great importance and strength. Its situation at the mouth of the Vistula gave it a monopoly of all the commerce of Poland; it served as the great emporium of the noble wheat crops, which in every age have constituted almost exclusively the wealth of that kingdom, and imported, in return, the wines, fruits, dress, and other luxuries which contributed to the splendour of its haughty nobles, and the rude garments which clothed the limbs of its unhappy peasantry. The river Mottaw, a tributary stream to the Vistula, traverses the whole extent of the city, and serves as a canal for the transport of its bulk in merchandise, while its waters fill the wet ditches, and contribute much to the strength of the place.¹

Previous to the war the fortifications had been much neglected, as its remote situation seemed to afford little likelihood of its being destined to undergo a siege; but after the battle of Jena, General Manstein, the governor, had laboured indefatigably to put the works in a good posture of defence; and such had been the success of his efforts, that they were in March all armed and in a condition to undergo a siege. It was surrounded in all places by a rampart, wet ditch, and strong palisades, in most by formidable outworks; the fort of Weischelmunde, in its vicinity, commanding the opening of the Vistula into the sea, required a separate siege for itself, and was connected with the town, from which it was distant four miles, by a chain of fortified posts. But the principal defence of the place consisted in the marshy nature of the ground in its vicinity, which could be traversed only on a few dykes or chaussées; and the power which the besieged had, by the command of the sluices of the Vistula, the waters of which, from their communication with the Baltic, where there are scarce any tides, are almost always at the same level, of inundating the country for several miles in breadth round two-thirds of the circumference of the walls.² The garrison consisted of twelve thousand Prus-

sians and five thousand Russians, under the command of Fieldmarshal Kalkreuth, a veteran whose intrepid character was a sufficient guarantee for a gallant defence.

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To form the besieging force, Napoleon had drawn together a large body of Italians, Saxons, Hessians, troops of Baden, with a division of Polish levies, and two divisions of French, in all twenty-seven thousand men. The most inefficient part of this motley group was employed in the blockade of Colberg and Graudentz; and the flower of the troops, consisting of the French divisions, a Saxon brigade, and the Baden and Polish hussars, amounting to about twenty thousand men, was destined to the more arduous undertaking of the siege of Dantzic. The artillery was commanded by the gallant General Lariboissière; the engineers were under the able directions of General Chasseloup; Marshal Lannes, with the grenadiers of the Guard, formerly under Oudinot, who was confined by sickness, formed in the rear of the Grand Army the covering force; and he was in communication with Massena, who had superseded Savary in the command of the corps which had combated at Ostrolenka, and was reinforced by the warlike Bavarian grenadiers of Wrede. Thus, while twenty thousand men were assembled for the siege, thirty thousand, under the most experienced marshals of France, were stationed so as to protect the operations against any incursions of the enemy.¹

27.
First operations of the besieging force.

¹ Jom. ii.
396, 397.
Dum. xviii.
126, 129.
Ann. Reg.
1807, 23.

So early as the middle of February, the advanced posts of the besiegers had begun to invest the place, and, on the 22d of that month, a sanguinary conflict ensued between the Polish hussars, who composed their vanguard, and a body of fifteen hundred Prussians, at Dirschau, which terminated, after a severe loss on both sides, in the retreat of the latter under the cannon of the ramparts. After this check, General Manstein no longer endeavoured to maintain himself on the outside of the walls; and as the French troops successively came up, the investment of the fortress was completed. The first serious conflict took place on the island or peninsula of Nehrung, the well-known tongue of land which separates the waters of the salt lake, called the Frische-haff, and the Vistula from the Baltic Sea. It is twelve leagues in length, but

28.

Capture of the Isle of Nehrung.

March 18

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March 20.

March 22.

¹ Dum. xviii.
133, 141.
Bign. vi. 284,
285. Wilson,
129.

29.
Progress of
the siege.

April 2.

April 16.

April 23.

seldom more than a mile or two in breadth, composed of sand-hills thrown up by the meeting of the river with the ocean, in one part of which the waves have broken in and overflowed the level space in its rear, which now forms the Frische-haff. As it communicates with Dantzic, which stands at its eastern extremity, the approaches to the town on that side could not be effected until it was cleared of the enemy. Sensible of its value, the besieged had spared no pains to strengthen themselves on this important neck of land; and the besiegers were equally resolute to dislodge them from it, and thereby complete the investment of the fortress. Early in the morning of the 20th March, a French detachment crossed the Frische-haff in boats, and surprised the Prussian posts on the opposite shore; fresh troops were ferried over in rapid succession, and the besiegers, before evening, established themselves in such force in the island, that, though Kalkreuth despatched a body of four thousand men out of the place to reinforce his posts in that quarter, they were unable to dislodge the enemy. On the contrary, they not only kept their ground, but progressively advancing two days afterwards, entirely cleared the peninsula of the Prussians, and completed the investment of the town on that side. By this success the communication of Dantzic with the land was entirely cut off; but the besieged, by means of the island of Holm and fort of Weischelmunde, with the intrenched camp of Neufahrwasser, which commands the entrance of the Vistula into the Baltic, had still the means of receiving succour by sea.¹

After full deliberation among the French engineers, it was determined to commence the siege by an attack on the fort of Hagelsberg, which stands on an eminence without the rampart on the western side of the town, which was the only one entirely free from inundations. The first parallel having been completed, a heavy fire was opened on the works in that quarter on the night of the 1st of April, though at the distance of eight hundred toises. A fortnight after, the second parallel was also finished, notwithstanding several vigorous sorties from the garrison; and by the 23d, amidst snow and sleet, the batteries were all armed and ready to play on the ramparts

at the distance only of sixty toises. On the following night, a tremendous fire was opened from fifty-six pieces of heavy cannon and twelve mortars, which, notwithstanding the utmost efforts on the part of the garrison, soon acquired a marked superiority over the batteries of the besieged. For a week together this cannonade continued without intermission night and day; a brave sortie was unable to arrest it more than a few hours; but although the city was already on fire in several places, and the artillery on the ramparts in part dismounted, yet, as the exterior works were faced with earth, not masonry, little progress was made in injuring them, and no practicable breach had been as yet effected. Finding themselves foiled in this species of attack, the French engineers had recourse to the more certain, but tedious method of approach by sap; the besieged countermined with indefatigable perseverance, but notwithstanding their utmost efforts, the mines of the French were pushed to within eighteen yards of the salient angle of the outermost works of Hagelsberg. At the same time a separate expedition against the island of Holm, which formed the western extremity of the peninsula of Nehrung, from whence it was separated only by one of the arms of the Vistula, proved successful; the garrison, consisting of five hundred men with fifteen pieces of cannon, were made prisoners, and the city by that means deprived of all the succour which it had hitherto obtained by the mouths of that river.¹*

April 26.

May 2.

May 5.

May 6.

¹ Dum. xviii.
146, 169.Bign. vi. 235,
286. Wilson,
129, 130.

Invested now on all sides, with its garrison weakened by the casualties of the siege, and the enemy's mines ready to blow its outworks on the side assailed into the air, Dantzic could not be expected to hold out for any length of time. Not deeming himself in sufficient strength to attempt the raising of the siege by a direct attack upon the enemy's cantonments on the Passarge, Benning-sen, with the concurrence of the Emperor Alexander, had

30.

Attempt of
the Allies to
raise the
siege.

* A remarkable incident occurred on this occasion, highly characteristic of the heroic spirit with which both parties were animated. A chasseur of the 12th regiment of French light infantry, named Fortunas, transported by the ardour of the attack, fell, in the dark, into the midst of a Russian detachment, and in a few minutes that detachment itself was surprised by the company to which the French soldier belonged. The Russian officers exclaimed, "Do not fire, we are French!" and threatened the chasseur with instant death if he betrayed them. "Fire instantly!" exclaimed the brave Fortunas, "they are Russians!" and fell pierced by the balls of his comrades.—DUMAS, xviii. 169.

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May 7.

resolved to attempt the relief of the fortress by a combined attack by land and sea from the peninsula of Nehrung and the mouths of the Vistula. The preparations made with this view were of the most formidable kind, and had wellnigh been crowned with success. General Kamenskoi, with five thousand men, was embarked at Pillau, under convoy of a Swedish and English man-of-war, and landed at Neufahrwasser, the fortified port at the mouth of the Vistula, distant four miles from Dantzic; while two thousand Prussians were to co-operate in the attack, by advancing along the peninsula of Nehrung, and the Grand Army was to be disquieted and hindered from sending succours by a feigned attack on Marshal Ney's corps; and at the same time General Touchkoff, who had succeeded Essen in the command of the troops on the Narew and the Bug, was to engage the attention of Massena's corps in that quarter. All these operations took place, and but for an accidental circumstance, would, to all appearance, have proved successful. The proposed feints were made with the desired effects on the side of Guttstadt and the Narew; but unfortunately the delay of the Swedish man-of-war, which had twelve hundred men on board, rendered it impossible for Kamenskoi to commence his attack before the 15th inst. In the meanwhile Napoleon, who had received intelligence of what was in preparation, and was fully aware of the imminent danger to which Lefebvre was exposed, had time to draw a large body of troops from Lannes' covering corps by the bridge of Marienswerder to the scene of danger.¹

¹ Wilson,
131, 132.
Dum. xviii.
173, 180.

31.

Which proves
unsuccessful.

This great reinforcement, comprising among other troops the grenadiers of the Guard under Oudinot, turned the scale, which at that period quivered on the beam. Early on the morning of the 15th, Kamenskoi marched out of the trenches of Neufahrwasser, and, after defiling over the bridge of the Vistula into the peninsula of Nehrung, advanced with the utmost intrepidity to the attack of the strong fortifications which the enemy had erected to bar their advance among the hills and copse-woods of that sandy peninsula. Their first onset was irresistible. The intrenchments were carried in the most gallant style, and all their cannon taken: success appeared

certain, as the defeated Saxons and Poles were flying in great disorder out of the woods into the sandy hills which lay between them and the town of Dantzic, when the victors were suddenly assailed in flank, when disordered by success, by Marshal Lannes, at the head of Oudinot's formidable grenadiers of the Guard. Unable to resist so vehement an onset, the Russians were in their turn driven back, and lost the intrenchments; but rallying again with admirable discipline, they renewed the assault and regained the works. Again they were expelled with great slaughter. A third time, stimulated by desperation, they returned to the charge, and routed the French grenadiers with such vigour, that Oudinot had a horse shot under him, and fell upon Marshal Lannes, and both these valiant chiefs thereafter combated on foot in the midst of their faithful grenadiers. But fresh reinforcements from the left bank were every moment received by the enemy: Kalkreuth, confining himself to a heavy cannonade, had made no sortie to aid this gallant effort to cut through the lines; and to complete Kamenskoi's misfortune, he received intelligence, during the action, that the Prussian corps of two thousand men, which was advancing along the Nehrung to co-operate in the attack, had been assailed by superior forces at Karlsberg, and routed with the loss of six hundred men and two pieces of cannon. Finding the undertaking, in these circumstances, hopeless, the brave Russian, at eight at night, ordered his heroic troops to retire, and they regained the shelter of the cannon of Weischelmunde without being pursued, but after sustaining a loss of seventeen hundred soldiers; while the French had to lament nearly as great a number of brave men who had fallen in this desperate conflict.¹

¹ Wilson, 131, 133. Bign. vi. 285, 287. Dum. xviii. 173, 183.

No other serious effort was made by the Allies for the relief of Dantzic. The besieged had provisions enough, but it was well known that their ammunition was almost exhausted, and that, without a speedy supply of that indispensable article, the place must ere long capitulate. An English brig of twenty-two guns, under Captain Strachey, with one hundred and fifty barrels of powder on board, made a brave attempt to force its way up the river, though the Vistula is a rapid stream, not more in general than sixty yards broad, and the passage was both defended

32.
Growing difficulties of the besieged, and fall of the place.

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May 20.

May 21.

May 24.

May 27.

¹ Dum. xviii.
180, 181.
Bign. vi. 287,
289. Wilson,
134, 135.
Marten's
Sup. iv. 420.

by numerous batteries and a boom thrown across the channel; but a cannon-shot having struck the rudder, and her rigging being almost entirely cut to pieces by the French fire, she was forced to surrender. Meanwhile the operations against the Hagelsberg were continued without intermission. The springing of several mines, though not attended with all the ruin which was expected by the besiegers, had the effect of ruining and laying open the outworks, and preparations were already made for blowing the counterscarp into the ditch. In vain a sortie from the ramparts was made, and at first attended with some success, to destroy these threatening advanced works of the enemy; the besieged were at length driven back, and on the next day the arrival of Marshal Mortier with a large part of his corps from the neighbourhood of Stralsund and Colberg, nearly doubled the effective strength of the enemy. Kalkreuth, however, was still unsubdued, and the most vigorous preparations had been made on the breaches of the ramparts to repel the assault which was hourly expected, when a summons from Lefebvre offered him honourable terms of capitulation. The situation of the brave veteran left him no alternative; though his strength was unsubdued, his ammunition was exhausted, and nothing remained but submission. The terms of capitulation were without difficulty arranged; the garrison was permitted to retire with their arms and the honours of war, on condition of not serving against France or its allies for a year, or till regularly exchanged; and on the 27th this great fortress, containing nine hundred pieces of cannon, but hardly any ammunition, was taken possession of by the French troops. The garrison, now reduced to nine thousand men, was marched through the peninsula of Nehrung to Königsberg: Kamenskoi, unable to render any assistance, set sail from Fort Weischelmunde with his own division, and its original garrison and a few invalids only remained on the 26th to open its gates to the enemy.¹

While this desperate struggle was going on round Dantzic, the Russians were making the utmost efforts to reinforce their principal army; but the time which they had was not sufficient to bring up from its immense extent the distant resources of their empire, and though

men were in abundance in the nearer provinces, both money and arms were wanting to equip them for the field. In the end of March and beginning of April, however, reinforcements to a considerable amount arrived on the Alle, among which the most important were the superb corps of the Guards under the Grand-duke Constantine, consisting of thirty battalions and thirty-four squadrons, full twenty thousand men, the flower of the Imperial army. A powerful reserve, drawn from the depots in the interior of the empire, of thirty thousand men, was also advancing under Prince Labanoff; but it was so far in the rear that it could not arrive at the scene of action before the end of June, and was therefore not to be relied on for the early operations of the campaign. The whole army which Benningsen had at his command, on the resumption of hostilities, was only one hundred and twenty thousand men, including in that force the detached corps of sixteen thousand Prussians and Russians in front of Königsberg under Lestocq, and the left wing on the Narew under Tolstoy, which was fifteen thousand strong; so that the force to be trusted to for the immediate shock on the Alle or the Passarge was scarcely ninety thousand. These were, however, all veterans inured to war, and animated in the highest degree both by their recent success at Eylau, and the presence of their beloved Emperor, who, since the end of March, had been at the headquarters of the army.^{1*}

By incredible exertions Napoleon had succeeded in assembling a much greater force. Notwithstanding the immense losses of his bloody winter campaign in Poland, such had been the vigour of his measures for recruiting his army, and such the efficacy of the combined influence

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33.

Reinforcements which arrived to the Russian army. Its strength and positions.

¹ Dum. xviii. App. Table, iii. and p. 220, 221. Jom. ii. 400. Wilson, 135, 136.

34.

Strength and position of the French army.

* The Russian army, when the campaign opened, was as follows:—
Centre under Benningsen on the Alle, at Arensdorf, Neuhoff,

Bergfried, and Bevern,	88,000
Right wing under Lestocq, near Königsberg and at Pillaw,	18,000
Left wing on the Narew under Tolstoy,	15,800

—See DUMAS, xviii. 220, 221; and WILSON, 136. 121,800

The militia, which the patriotic ardour of the Russians led them to raise, were unable to march from want of arms and ammunition, which the ill-timed parsimony of England withheld. One hundred and sixty thousand muskets, sent out in haste by the British government after the change of ministry, arrived at Königsberg in the end of June, after the contest had been terminated on the field of Friedland, and escaped seizure by the French only by not being landed.
—HARD. iv. 417.

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¹ Dum, xviii.
220, 221.
Wilson, 136.
Jom. ii. 401.
Bign. vi. 294.

of terror, coercion, military ardour, and patriotic spirit, which he had contrived to bring to bear upon the warlike population of France, Germany, and Poland, that a greater host than had ever yet been witnessed together in modern Europe was now assembled round his eagles. Exclusive of the army of observation on the Elbe, and the garrisons and blockading corps in his rear, no less than a hundred and fifty thousand infantry, and thirty-five thousand horse, were ready for immediate action on the Passarge and the Narew. Nor was it merely from its nominal strength that this immense force was formidable; its discipline and equipment had attained the very highest perfection. The requisitions enforced by the terrors of military execution, had extorted from Germany all the supplies of which it stood in need: the cavalry were remounted, the artillery waggons and carriages repaired and in the best condition; the reserve parks and pontoon trains fully supplied; the return of spring had restored numbers of the veterans to their ranks, the never-failing conscription filled up the chasms produced by Pultusk and Eylau; while the recent successes in Silesia and at Dantzic had revived in the warlike multitude that confidence in themselves and in their renowned leader which the disasters of the winter campaign had much impaired, but which has ever been found, even more than numbers or skill, to contribute to military success.^{1*} Vast as the resources of Russia un-

* The composition and distribution of this force, previous to the resumption of hostilities, was as follows:—

	Infantry.	Cavalry.	Stationed at
First Corps, Bernadotte,	23,547	3,744	Braunsberg and Spandau.
Fourth do. Soult,	30,199	1,366	Lubstadt and Alkin.
Sixth do. Ney,	15,883	1,117	Guttstadt and the right of the Passarge.
Third, Davoust,	28,445	1,125	Osterode and Allenstein.
Imperial Guard, Bessières,	7,319	1,808	Finkenstein.
Reserve, Cavalry, Murat,		21,428	Passarge and Lower Vistula.
Reserve Corps, Lannes,	15,090	250	Mariensberg.
Eighth Corps, Mortier,	14,000	1,000	Lower Vistula.
Second Corps, Massena,	17,580	2,604	Narew.
	152,063	34,442	

Exclusive of officers, which made the force at least 155,000 infantry and 35,000 cavalry. The corps of Lefebvre, after the capture of Dantzic, was broken up and divided between those of Lannes and Mortier and the garrison of the place; another was in Dalmatia, under Marmont; the ninth in Silesia, under Vandamme. Augereau's corps was divided among the others after its terrific losses in the battle of Eylau.—DUMAS, xviii. 222, 223; *Pièces Just.* No. 3; and JOMINI, ii. 403.

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doubtedly are when time has been afforded to collect into one focus its unwieldy strength, it was now fairly over-matched by the banded strength of western Europe on its own frontier; and though the Czar might possibly have combated on equal terms with Napoleon on the Wolga or the Dneister, he was inadequate to the encounter on the Alle or the Narew.

The Emperor Alexander had arrived at the headquarters of his army on the 28th March, and resided since that time with the King of Prussia at Bartenstein, a little in the rear of the cantonments of the soldiers. There they had, for two months, carried on a sort of negotiation with the French Emperor by means of confidential agents; but this show of pacific overtures, which were only intended on either side to give time and propitiate Austria, by seeming to listen to her offers of mediation, was abandoned in the middle of May, and both parties prepared to determine the contest by the sword. To compensate for his inferiority of force, and provide a point of support for his troops, even in the first line, Benningsen had, with great care, constructed a formidable intrenched camp, composed of six great works regularly fortified, and sixteen lunettes or armed ravelins, astride on the opposite banks of the river Alle. Thither he proposed to retire, in the event of the enemy bringing an overwhelming force to bear upon his columns; but he did not conceive himself sufficiently strong until the reinforcements under Prince Labanoff arrived, to commence any serious offensive movement against the French army, and in consequence allowed the siege of Dantzic, as already mentioned, to be brought to a successful issue, without any other demonstration for its relief than the cannonade against Ney's corps, intended as a diversion in favour of Kamenskoi's attack. The army, though so much inferior in numerical strength to the French, was animated with the best spirit, and the great magazines and harbour of Königsberg supplied it with every necessary. But the situation of that city, without fortifications, and with its back to the gulf of the Curishé, from whence retreat was impossible, rendered it a situation extremely ill adapted, as the event proved, for the security of the stores on which the operations of the army depended.¹

35.
Defensive
measures of
the Russians.

¹ Jom. ii.
401, 402.
Wilson, 136,
137. Dum.
xviii. 211,
217.

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36.

Designs of
the Russians
on Ney's
corps.

June 4.

¹ Jom. ii. 403.
Wilson, 136.
Dum. xviii.
231.

37.
Feigned
attacks on the
bridges of the
Passarge, and
real attack on
Marshal Ney.
June 5.

After the fall of Dantzic, and when the French army was reinforced by full thirty thousand men from the covering and besieging force, Benningsen was seduced, by the exposed situation of Marshal Ney's corps at Guttstadt, on the right bank of the Passarge, midway between the two armies, to hazard an attack on that insulated body. He had been stationed there by Napoleon expressly in order to serve as a bait to draw the Russian generals into that perilous encounter ; and the event proved with perfect success. Early in June all the corps of their army were put in motion, in order to envelope the French marshal. For this purpose, he proposed to make a feint of forcing the passage of the Passarge, at the two points of Spandau and Lomitten, and at the same time assail Ney in his advanced position at Guttstadt, in front and both flanks. If, by these means, the corps which he commanded could be destroyed, it was intended on the following day to renew the attack on the bridges in good earnest, and fall with the whole centre of the Russian army on the corps of Soult, cantoned behind the Passarge, and at such a distance from that of Davoust, as to afford some ground for hope that it, too, might be seriously injured before the remainder of the French troops could advance to its relief. Should this daring attack fail, it was always in their power to retire to the fortified central position of Heilsberg, and there endeavour to arrest the enemy, as Kray had done with Moreau at Ulm, till the great reinforcements, under Labanoff, should enable them to resume the offensive.¹

Early on the morning of the 5th June, the whole Russian army was put in motion for the execution of this well-conceived enterprise. The feigned attacks, intended to distract the enemy's attention on the two fortified bridges of Spandau and Lomitten, took place at the prescribed time, and perfectly answered the object in view. The Prussians at the former point, and the Russians at the latter, pressed the enemy so severely and with forces so considerable, that they supposed the forcing of the bridges was really intended, and in consequence, when the enemy drew off in the evening with the loss of several hundred killed and wounded, from each of these places, represented their retreat as evidence of a repulse. Berna-

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dotte, who commanded at Spandau, and had collected his whole corps to defend that important passage, was wounded by a musket-ball on the head, during the heat of the action, and replaced in command by General Dupont. Meanwhile the real attack was directed against Ney's corps in its advanced position at Guttstadt, full seven miles to the right of the Passarge, and so completely in the midst of the Russian army, now that their advanced columns were assailing the bridges over that river, that its capture appeared inevitable. In effect, the marshal was taken so completely by surprise, that if Benningsen had pressed the retiring columns with any thing like the vigour which Napoleon would have exerted on a similar occasion, they must inevitably have been destroyed.¹

¹ Dum. xviii.
230, 238.
Jom. ii. 403,
404. Wilson,
136.

But, unfortunately, orders had been issued for the different corps to delay the onset till they were in a condition to render assistance to each other; and as some were impeded in the march by unforeseen accidents, the serious attack on Guttstadt did not take place till two o'clock in the afternoon. It was then carried by assault, and four hundred prisoners, with considerable magazines and several guns, were taken; but after having thus made themselves masters of his headquarters, the Russians, though more than double in number to the enemy, exerted so little activity in following up their success, that Ney, who displayed on this trying occasion all his wonted skill and firmness, was enabled to effect his retreat, with comparatively little loss, to Ankendorf and Heilighenthal, where he passed the night. On the following morning he resumed his march, though pressed on all sides by greatly superior forces; imposed on the enemy in the middle of it by a bold and well-conceived return to Heilighenthal, which gave time for his artillery and horse to defile over the bridge in his rear; and at length passed the Passarge at Dippen, with the loss, in the whole of his retreat, of only a thousand killed and wounded, and an equal number made prisoners. On arriving at the heights of Dippen, as the rear-guard of Ney was defiling over, the Russians had the mortification of discovering that the bridge was not only altogether unprotected by a *tête du pont*,² but completely commanded

38.
Its success at
first, and final
failure.

June 6.

² Wilson,
136, 137.
Dum. xviii.
230, 246.
Jom. ii. 403,
405.

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39.
Napoleon
concentrates
his army, and
the Russians
fall back.

June 7.

by the heights on which they stood on the right bank ; so that, if they had exerted ordinary vigour in the attack of the preceding day, the negligence of Napoleon had given them the means of totally destroying the exposed corps of his gallant lieutenant.

This sudden though unfortunate attack on the centre of his position, very much disconcerted the Emperor Napoleon, the more especially as he received intelligence, the same day, of the passage of the Alle by Platoff at the head of his Cossacks, and the surprise of five hundred men, who were made prisoners,* and also of a regiment of Cossacks having swam the Passarge, and cut to pieces an escort of cavalry, and captured some artillery and baggage. He instantly commenced the concentration of his army. The corps of Ney, escaped from so serious a danger, was united to that of Lannes, which had suffered no loss ; the Guard and reserve cavalry under Murat were commanded to assemble and support him with the utmost expedition ; Mortier was ordered up by forced marches by Mohrungen ; the corps of Bernadotte, which, since his wound, was intrusted to the directions of Victor, directed to concentrate itself for the protection of Elbing ; and Soult, who had assembled his corps at Lubstadt, enjoined to force the passage of the Passarge at Wolfendorf, in order to threaten the communications of the enemy with their intrenched camp at Heilsberg ; while Davoust connected himself by the right with Ney, and formed an imposing mass behind the Passarge, against which, it was hoped, all the efforts of the enemy would be shattered. But these great preparations were suitable rather to the confidence which Napoleon felt in himself than that with which his adversaries were inspired. Having failed in his original and well-conceived project of cutting off the corps of Marshal Ney in its advanced

* The French officer in command owed his life to the fortunate incident of his giving the Russian commander the freemasons' sign when seizing his hand just as a lance was about to pierce his breast.—WILSON, 138.—In reviewing Sir Robert Wilson's work, the Edinburgh Review says, this is an anecdote so incredible, that no amount of testimony could make them believe it ; but this only shows the critic's ignorance. The same fortunate presence of mind, in making use of the freemasons' sign, saved the life of a gallant officer, the author's father-in-law, Lieutenant-Colonel Tytler, during the American war, who, by giving one of the enemy's officers the freemasons' grip when he lay on the ground with a bayonet at his breast, succeeded in interesting the generous American in his behalf, and saving his life.

position close to his cantonments, Benningsen had no intention of hazarding his army by commencing offensive operations against a force so greatly superior, with a few bridges over the Passarge for his only retreat in case of disaster. On the morning of the 8th, the increasing forces which the enemy displayed at Dippen, and the vivacity of their cannonade at that point, prognosticated some decisive movement; and about noon the loud shouts of the soldiers announced the arrival of Napoleon in person. Soon after, General Havoiski, with a body of Cossacks, part of the army opposed to Soult, surprised three regiments of horse, the advanced guard of Soult's corps, which had obeyed its orders and crossed the river at Wolfendorf, and made three hundred prisoners, besides killing a still greater number. But these partial successes were insufficient to arrest the progress of the enemy, whose masses, now rapidly arriving on its banks, gave him a decided superiority; and Benningsen resolved to fall back to the intrenched camp at Heilsberg, while Bagrathion covered the retreat on the left with five thousand foot and two thousand horse, and Platoff with three thousand Cossacks on the right.¹

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¹ Wilson,
138, 139.
Jom. ii. 405.
Dum. xviii.
248, 258.

The retreat, however, which was now commenced, was far more hazardous than that which they had just effected with such skill; for it was to be made in presence of Napoleon and a hundred thousand men. No sooner had the Russian carriages begun to defile to the rear, than the French crossed the Passarge in great strength at all points; the Guards and cavalry, with the Emperor at their head, at Elditten, and the other marshals at Spandau, Lomitten, and Dippen. Their immense masses converged from all these different points towards Guttstadt and Altkirch, whither the Russian army had retired in one compact body, following the direct road to their intrenchments at Heilsberg. The great bulk of the army was so far advanced as to be beyond the reach of danger; but the rearguard, under Bagrathion and Platoff, was exposed to the most imminent hazard, especially when, towards evening, it became necessary to halt and arrest the enemy, in order to give time for the numerous carriages and guns in their rear to defile over the Alle by the four bridges by which alone Heilsberg could be reached. The brave

40.
The Russians, pursued by the French, fall back to Heilsberg.
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Russian, however, took post at Glottaw, and sent forth the cavalry of the Imperial Guard and Cossacks into the plain to check the advance of his pursuers. The French infantry instantly halted and formed squares; while twelve thousand of Murat's dragoons rushed upon the rearguard at full speed, threatening to annihilate them by their thundering charge. Such, however, was the steadiness and intrepidity of the Russian horse, that they successfully combated against the fearful odds by which they were assailed. Several brilliant charges took place without any decisive result on either side. But not one square of the retreating rearguard was broken, not one squadron dispersed; and after a sanguinary conflict, Bagrathion, having gained time for the whole artillery and carriages in his rear to defile over the bridge, withdrew to the other side of the Alle, abandoning Guttstadt, with no greater loss in killed and wounded than he had inflicted upon the enemy:—a rare example of intrepidity and skill in such trying circumstances, even more remarkable than the retreat of Marshal Ney two days before, as his own force was much less, and the pursuing host incomparably greater. At the same time, Platoff, on his side, also gained the river, and crossed the bridges in safety, having, in order to give an example of coolness to his men, dismounted from his horse, and, with the tranquillity of parade exercise, withdrawn his forces in small bodies, with large intervals between them, which so effectually imposed upon the enemy, that he sustained no serious molestation in his retreat.¹

¹ Ann. Reg.
1807, 171.
Wilson, 140,
143. Dum.
xviii. 258,
264. Jom. ii.
405.

41.
Different
plans of oper-
ation which
presented
themselves to
Napoleon.

Having thus succeeded in throwing the river Alle between themselves and the French army, and broken down all the bridges over that river, the Russians were enabled, without further molestation, to withdraw all their troops into the intrenched camp at Heilsberg, where they stood firm under the cover of most formidable fieldworks. Napoleon had now one of two courses to follow. In his front was the great fortified camp of the enemy, by storming which he might hope to terminate the war in a single bloody battle; a little to his left was the city of Königsberg, containing the whole magazines and reserve stores of their army. The most obvious course would have been to have executed a general movement with the right in

front, passing Heilsberg, so as to establish the French lines between that place and Bischoffstein, with the right extending towards Bartenstein, and the left reaching to Guttstadt; repeating thereby the circuitous sweep round the enemy's position, which his great numerical superiority gave him the means of so easily effecting, and which had proved so fatal to the Austrians at Ulm, and the Prussians at Jena. The second was to advance with the main body of the army straight against their intrenchments at Heilsberg, and in the event of their proving so strong as to defy open force, threatening to turn them by the advance of fifty thousand men on the left towards Eylau, so as to menace the communications of the enemy with his magazines at Königsberg. The first plan offered the most decisive results, as the Russian army, if cut off from its own frontier, by being turned on the right, would have been exposed to total destruction in the event of being thrown, after a defeat, upon Königsberg and the *cul-de-sac* of the Curishé. But the second was most easy of immediate execution, from its avoiding the difficult and intricate country into which an advance upon Bischoffstein would have led the army; and, notwithstanding the obvious risk to which his left wing would be exposed by advancing between a superior mass of the enemy and the sea, Napoleon flattered himself that he would so engage his attention in front as to prevent him from taking advantage of the chances thus offered in his favour.¹

On the 10th June, accordingly, preparations were made for a front attack upon the intrenched camp of Heilsberg, while Davoust and Mortier moved forward on the French left to turn its right flank, and menace the enemy's communication with Königsberg. For this purpose, the cavalry of Murat led the advance against the Russian intrenchments, which were about ten miles distant; bridges were speedily thrown across the Alle at various points; Murat was immediately followed by the corps of Soult, Lannes, Ney, and the infantry of the Guard, who followed on both sides of that river to Heilsberg, which is situated further down its course. As long as Bagrathion was pursuing his way through the broken ground on the other side of Guttstadt, he was enabled to

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¹ Ann. Reg.
1807, 171.
Jom. ii. 408.
Dum. xviii.
263, 264.

42.
Advance
upon Heils-
berg.
June 10.

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keep the enemy tolerably at bay : but when he was obliged to evacuate that favourite cover, and enter upon the open plain, which extended on both sides of the Alle to Heilsberg, his task of covering the retreat became much more difficult. In vain the Russian horse, by repeated charges, strove to retard the advance of their indefatigable pursuers; in vain the infantry retired by échelon in alternate lines to sustain by continued fire their retrograde movements. The French cavalry and horse-artillery incessantly pressed on : by degrees the losses of the Russians became more severe, and they at length began to fall into confusion. At this critical moment, the opportune arrival of fifteen squadrons of Prussian cavalry, with a troop of horse-artillery, which Benningsen sent to their succour, gave great relief; and these brave troops, by their gallant bearing, enabled Bagrathion to maintain the fight, though with serious loss, till six at night, when the whole Allied army had got within its lines. Then, on the word being given, the Russian and Prussian cavalry withdrew by their flanks, exposing to view within half cannon-shot the formidable intrenchments, bristling with bayonets, and armed in this part with one hundred and fifty pieces of heavy artillery. Instantly a fire of grape of extraordinary severity was opened upon the enemy, which speedily swept off all the squadrons who could not escape from its fury; and though Murat brought up several batteries of cannon, and swarms of tirailleurs occupied every thicket and kept up an incessant rattle along the whole front of the lines, yet they produced no impression, and the superiority of the Russian fire was very apparent.¹

¹ Wilson,
144, 146.
Jom. ii. 409.
Dum. xviii.
264, 266, 272.

43.

Description of
the position
and intrench-
ed camp of
Heilsberg.

The position of Heilsberg, however, was too important for Napoleon to relinquish the prospect of making himself master of it by main force without a struggle. Situated on a cluster of heights on both banks of the Alle, of which the town covered a part, it commanded the three roads of Wormditt, Mohlsack, and Landsberg, which intersected each other within the intrenched camp, and in this way blocked up the access to Eylau and Königsberg. As long as the Russians held this important position, and at the same time maintained the course of the Lower Passarge towards Braunsberg, their

lines might be considered unassailable. But from the moment that they were driven from the latter ground, and the enemy's columns began to interpose between the intrenched camp and the sea, threatening Eylau and Friedland, its advantages were at an end, because it was cut off from its own communication with the very depots which it was designed to protect. Its weakest side was that on the left bank of the Alle, which was connected with the redoubt on the other side by four bridges. Nearly eighty thousand men were here assembled, under the cover of above five hundred pieces of cannon, in nine divisions: of which seven, under the Grand-duke Constantine, occupied the left bank of the river, and two, under Prince Gortchakoff, the right bank; while Kamenskoi was stationed in the redoubts which covered the front of the position.¹

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¹ Wilson,
145, 146.
Dum. xviii.
266, 268.
Bign. vi. 298.

Napoleon having collected forty pieces of artillery, under the command of General Dulauloy, on his left, pushed them forward, and, by the vivacity of their fire, in some degree weakened that of the enemy to which they were opposed. The divisions of St Cyr and Legrand, part of Soult's corps, with Murat's cavalry, advanced about seven in the evening, by the villages of Lauden, Langwiesse, and Bewernicken, to the attack of the enemy's redoubts on the right bank of the river. These brave men had no sooner quitted the cover of the ravine which for some time sheltered them from the enemy's fire, than they rushed forward with such vigour, that in the first onset they carried the principal redoubt of the Russians in that quarter, with all the guns which it contained; while St Hilaire, with his division, penetrated between that intrenchment and the neighbouring works. The moment was critical, and the least wavering would have exposed the Russians to total ruin; for a line of redoubts broken in upon at one point is wellnigh lost. But Benningsen was at the head of men who were equal to any emergency. Prince Gortchakoff, who commanded the Russian right wing, instantly ordered the divisions under his command to charge: the animating hurras of his men demonstrated that he had not calculated in vain on their intrepidity at that trying crisis. On they rushed with fixed bayonets; and the two regiments which

44.
Battle of
Heilsberg.

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occupied the redoubt were totally destroyed, and their eagles taken. Following up their success, the Russians burst out into the plain between the wood and the redoubts, and forced Soult's divisions to give ground. With the steadiness of discipline, however, they retired in hollow squares by *échelon*, all of which vomited forth an incessant rolling fire upon their pursuers: the approach of night gave these moving citadels the appearance of being encircled with flame, while the intrenchments resembled a line of volcanoes in vehement eruption. At length, however, the retreat of Legrand and St Cyr obliged St Hilaire, who had penetrated to the very foot of the redoubts, and had borne without flinching their terrible discharge of grape, also to retire. Savary, with two regiments of the Guard and twelve guns, came up to cover his retreat: he, in his turn, however, was surrounded. The French at all points retired to the cover of the woods, and narrowly escaped being made prisoners by the Allied cavalry; and at length, grievously shattered, the victorious Russians were again withdrawn into their intrenchments.^{1*}

¹ Wilson,
145, 146.
Dum. xviii.
272, 277.
Bign. vi. 299.
Savary, iii.
53.

45.
Fresh attack
by Lannes,
which also
proves unsuc-
cessful.

The vehement cannonade which had so long illuminated the heavens now ceased, and the cries of the wounded, in the plain at the foot of the intrenchments, began to be heard above the declining roar of the musketry. At eleven at night, however, a deserter came into the Russian lines, and announced that a fresh attack was preparing. Suitable arrangements were accordingly made; and hardly were they completed, when dark masses of the enemy were seen, by the uncertain twi-

* "I had on this occasion," says Savary, "an exceedingly warm altercation with the Grand-duke of Berg (Murat), who sent to me, in the very thickest of the action, orders to move forward and attack. I bade the officer who brought the order go to the devil, asking, at the same time, if he did not see how we were engaged. That prince, who would have commanded every where, wished that I should cease firing, at the hottest period of the fight, to march forward: he would not see, that if I had done so, I should infallibly have been destroyed before reaching the enemy. For a quarter of an hour I exchanged grape with the enemy—nothing enabled me to keep my ground but the rapidity of my fire. The coming on of night was most fortunate. While every one slumbered, the Emperor sent for me. He was content with my charge, but scolded me for having failed in the support of Murat. When defending myself, I had the boldness to say he was a fool, who would some day cause us to lose a great battle; and that it would be better for us if he was less brave and had more common sense. The Emperor bade me be silent, saying, I was in a passion, but did not think the less of what I had said. Next day he was in very bad humour; our wounded were as numerous as in a pitched battle."—SAVARY, iii. 54.—"He was particularly angry at the cavalry, saying they had done nothing he had ordered."—WILSON, 149.

light of a midsummer night, to issue from the woods, and advance with a swift pace across the bloody plain which separated them from the redoubts. Instantly the batteries opened on the moving masses: they staggered under the discharge, but still pressed on, without returning a shot. But when they arrived within reach of the musketry, the fire became so vehement that the heads of the columns were entirely swept away, and the remainder driven back in great disorder, after sustaining a frightful loss. At length, at midnight, after twelve hours' incessant fighting in the retreat and round the intrenchments, the firing entirely ceased, and nothing was heard in the narrow space which separated the two armies but the groans of the wounded, who, anticipating a renewal of the combat in the morning, and tortured by pain, implored removal, relief, or even death itself, to put a period to their sufferings.¹*

¹ Wilson, 146, 147.
Dum. xviii. 276, 278.
Bign. vi. 299.
Sav. iii. 53, 54.

Heavy rain fell in the early part of the night, which, though it severely distressed the soldiers who were unhurt in their bivouacs, assuaged the thirst and diminished the sufferings of the host of wounded of both armies who lay mingled together on the plain. With the first dawn of day the Russians again stood to their arms, expecting every moment to be attacked; but the morning passed over without any movement on the

46.
Frightful appearance of the slain after the battle.

* The bad success of the attack on Heilsberg gave rise to a furious altercation between Lannes and Murat, and an explosion of the former, who was subject to ungovernable fits of passion, even with the Emperor himself. It is thus narrated, with dramatic power, by the Duchess of Abrantes:—"Your brother-in-law is a mountebank, sire; a tight-rope dancer, with his white dancing plume."—"Come, now, you are joking!" answered Napoleon in good humour: "is he not brave?"—"And who is not so in France? We point with the finger at a coward. Soult and I have done our duty: we refuse to allow the honour of the day to your brother-in-law—to his Serene and Imperial Highness Prince Murat! Truly these titles make one shrug his shoulders! The mania of royalty has seized him also; and it is to tack his mantle to your own that you wish to rob us of our glory. You have only to speak: we have enough remaining—we will willingly give it to him."—"Yes!" exclaimed Napoleon, no longer able to contain himself; "I will bestow or take away glory as I please: for hear ye! it is I ALONE who give you both glory and success."—On this Lannes became pale with rage; and with a voice quivering with passion he exclaimed, "Yes! yes! because you have marched up to the ankles in gore on this bloody field, you think yourself a great man; and your fine emplumed brother-in-law crows on his own dunghill. I will have no more of this. And this fine victory of yours—a great triumph truly!—twelve thousand corpses lying on the plain to keep the field for *your* honour, where you can only trace the French uniform by fractures and mutilation: and yet to deny to *me*—to me, Lannes—my due share in the honours of the day!"—"D'ABRANTES, ix. 369, 372. The lively duchess, with her usual inaccuracy in military details, recounts this scene as relating to the battle of Eylau; but that is impossible, as Lannes was not in that battle at all, but sick in the rear.—*Vide Ante*, Chap. xlv. § 64.

Violent explosion of Lannes, Murat, and Napoleon in consequence.

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part of the enemy. As the light broke, the French were descried on the skirts of the wood in order of battle: but, more even than by their well-appointed battalions and squadrons, the eyes of all were riveted on a spectacle inconceivably frightful between their lines and the redoubts. This space, about a quarter of a mile broad and above a mile in length, presented a sheet of naked human bodies—the greater part dead, but some showing by their motions that they preserved consciousness or implored relief. Six thousand corpses were there lying together as close as they had stood in their ranks, stript during the night of every rag of garment by the cupidity of the camp-followers of either army, ghastly pale, or purple with the blood which was still oozing from their wounds. How inured soever to the horrors of a campaign, the soldiers of both armies, even while they loathed it, felt their eyes fascinated by this harrowing spectacle, which exhibited war, stripped of all its pomp, in its native barbarity; and, by common consent, the interval of hostilities was employed in burying the dead, and removing the shivering wounded to the rear of the armies.¹

¹ Wilson,
147. Sav. iii.
54.

47.
Napoleon
turns their
flank, and
compels them
to evacuate
Heilsberg.

Napoleon was extremely disconcerted by this repulse, and vented his ill-humour in violent sallies of passion against his generals. The butchery had been worse than useless—it had been hurtful. The Russians still held, in unshaken strength, their intrenchments; twelve thousand French had fallen around their redoubts, without having gained, at the close of the day, the mastery of one of them; the ditches were filled with their dead bodies, but no part of them had been crossed. Eight thousand Russians, also, were killed or wounded; and this loss, though less than that of their opponents, from their having fought in part under cover, was still greater perhaps in proportion to the relative strength of their army. The French Emperor, however, had felt too severely the strength of the enemy's position to venture upon a renewal of the attack, and therefore he resolved to compel the Russians to evacuate it by manœuvring on their flank. For this purpose, he took advantage of the arrival of Marshal Davoust's corps to push it forward at noon on the Landsberg road toward Eylau and Königs-

June 11.

berg. This movement alarmed Benningsen, who, though not apprehensive of being forced in his intrenched position, was extremely afraid of being cut off from his supplies at Königsberg, on which the army depended for its daily subsistence; and at the same time, an order of Napoleon to Victor was intercepted, which contained commands to attack Lestocq and the right wing of the Allies at all points, and push on for Königsberg. Seeing the movement of the enemy to turn his right flank and threaten his magazines now clearly pronounced, the Russian general gave orders to retreat. The intrenched camp was evacuated at nightfall, and the army marched all the night of the 11th, and established themselves, at break of day, in a position in front of Bartenstein, headquarters being transferred to that town. Though great part of this operation was performed after daybreak on the 12th, in sight of the enemy, yet such was the respect produced by the battle of Heilsberg, that they made no attempt whatever to molest the retreat.¹

No sooner was this retrograde movement perceived by the French Emperor, on the morning of the 12th, than he detached Murat's dragoons to follow upon the traces of the enemy; and he himself, moving forward his whole army, established his headquarters in the evening on the field of Preussich-Eylau. It was no longer a shivering scene of ice and snow: green fields were to be seen on all sides; clear and placid lakes gave variety and animation to the landscape; woods resplendent with the early green of summer, fringed the rising grounds; and numerous white villages, with handsome spires, rose above their summit, attesting the industry and prosperity of the inhabitants under the paternal government of Old Prussia. The French soldiers could hardly recognise, in the gay and smiling objects around them, the frightful scene of devastation and blood which was imprinted in such sombre colours in their recollection by the events of which it had been the theatre in the preceding winter. Meanwhile General Lestocq resolved to break up from Braunsberg and the Lower Passarge, and retire by the margin of the Frische-haff towards Königsberg—a measure which had become indispensable to prevent his being entirely cut off from his communi-

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¹ Wilson,
149, 151.
Dum. xviii.
279, 283.
Jom. ii. 409.

48.
Movements
of the two
armies before
the battle of
Friedland.

June 12.

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June 13.

¹ Wilson,
150, 152.
Dum. xviii.
280, 287.
Jom. ii. 410,
411. Sav. iii.
54, 55. Bign.
vi. 299, 300.

49.
Description
of the field of
Friedland.

cation with the main army, and thrown back without resource on the margin of the sea. Kamenskoi was also directed by Benningsen to march upon Königsberg; but on arriving at Mulhausen, on the road to that city, he found it already occupied by the advanced guard of Davoust, and only reached the object of his destination by making a very long circuit. During the night of the 12th, the Russians resumed their march through Schippenheil, and on the following morning had reached the banks of the Alle. On arriving there, however, Benningsen received information that the French had, by the rapidity of their movements and by following the chord of the arc which led to Königsberg, while his own troops were traversing the circumference, anticipated him in his march upon that city, and were already so far advanced on the road that they could not be overtaken. Murat and Victor were in full advance from Eylau to Königsberg: Soult was marching on Creutzberg: Napoleon himself, at the head of the corps of Lannes, Ney, and Mortier, was approaching to FRIEDLAND by Domnau, at which latter place the Imperial Guard was already arrived. A glance at the map must be sufficient to show that, by these different movements, not only was the bulk of the French army interposed between the Russian general and Königsberg, where all his magazines were placed, but Napoleon was in a situation, by a rapid advance upon Wehlau, to threaten his line of retreat to the Russian frontier. In these circumstances, no time was to be lost; and, though the troops were dreadfully fatigued, orders were given to continue the march all day, and by great exertions the army reached Friedland, where headquarters were established in the evening.¹

Friedland, which has acquired immortal celebrity by the memorable battle of which it was the theatre, is a considerable town situated on the left bank of the river Alle, which there flows in a northern direction towards the Baltic Sea. It is situated between the river and a large artificial lake or fish-pond, which lies to the north, and has been formed by damming up a rivulet called the Mill Stream, which flows from the high grounds to the westward near Posthenen into the Alle, and falls into it at right angles. The windings of the

Alle serve as a natural wet ditch round Friedland on the south and east ; the artificial lake protects it on the north : in a military point of view, therefore, it is only accessible on the western side, where it is approached by the road from Eylau, which the French were pursuing, and from which side also set out the roads to Königsberg to the north, and Wehlau and Tilsit on the northwest. In that direction there is a large open space dotted with villages and cultivated ground, neither hill nor plain, but an undulating surface, intersected only along its whole extent by the ravine formed by the Mill Stream, which is very deep, with rugged sides, and in many places, from the reflux waters, scarcely fordable. At the distance of two miles from Friedland as a centre, the cultivated plain to the westward is bounded by a semicircle of woods, which fringe the higher grounds and form the horizon when looking in that direction from the town. The banks of the Alle on the eastward are very steep ; and though there are three bridges over that river, two of which were formed by the Russians with pontoons at the town itself, in other quarters it could be passed only at a few fords, which were unknown to the Allies till late in the evening, and at that period, from the recent heavy rains, were scarcely practicable.¹

¹ Wilson,
152, 153.
Dum. xix. 6.
Rel. de la
Camp. par
un Témoin
Oculaire, 74.

In the night of the 13th, Benningsen received information that the corps of Lannes, which had suffered so severely at Heilsberg, was lying at Posthenen, a village about three miles from Friedland on the road to Königsberg. The exposed situation of that corps, which formed the vanguard of the French army, and the well-known losses which it had sustained at Heilsberg, inspired the Russian general with the hope that by a sudden attack it might be destroyed before the main body of Napoleon's forces could advance to its relief. This resolution was taken at two in the morning of the 14th ; orders were immediately despatched, and at four the Russian vanguard was already defiling over the bridge at Friedland. The opportunity was tempting, and to all appearance the corps of Lannes was placed in a situation of great danger. It consisted now of only twelve thousand infantry and three thousand horse ; and though the corps of Moritz, Ney, and Victor, with great part of the cavalry of Murat.

50.
Benningsen
resolves to
attack
Lannes'
corps. Situa-
tion of that
corps.

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might be shortly expected to arrive at the scene of action, yet some hours must elapse before the foremost of these powerful auxiliaries could be relied on, and in the meanwhile this detached body was exposed to the shock of above fifty thousand veteran troops, who, by proper exertion, might be directed against it. Here, in short, as at Marengo, the French army was to be attacked when on a line of march in *échelon*, by the concentrated masses of the enemy, who fell first on the leading corps. But there was this essential distinction between its position on these two memorable days, that on the former occasion the army was stationary or retreating, so that the distant corps could not arrive till late on the field of battle, whereas here it was advancing: and consequently, unless decisive success were gained in the outset, the assailants would have the whole hostile body upon their hands; and in case of defeat could retreat only by the bridge of the Alle, which was wholly inadequate to afford an issue to so large a force.¹

¹ Wilson, 152,
153. Jom. ii.
411, 412.
Bign. vi. 312,
313. Dum.
xix. 3, 9.

51.
He crosses
the Alle, and
attacks the
French
marshal.

No sooner were the advanced posts of the Russians descried by the videttes of Lannes' corps, than a sharp fire of musketry began, which was soon increased to a heavy cannonade as the dark masses of infantry and cavalry were seen swiftly advancing through the gray twilight of the summer morning. The French *tirailleurs* fell back, skirmishing, however, sharply as they retired: the alarm was speedily communicated to the rear, and the whole corps stood to arms. A single Russian division had at first been passed over; but the enemy's troops were so constantly fed from the rear, and the resistance opposed so considerable, that Benningsen soon found himself under the necessity of passing over another to its support. Three pontoon bridges were constructed to facilitate the passage; and by degrees, as the increasing masses of the enemy showed that other corps had arrived to the support of Lannes, the whole army was brought across. Thus was the Russian general, who at first contemplated only a partial operation, insensibly drawn into a general action; and that, too, in the most disadvantageous of all possible situations—with a superior force of the enemy in front, and a deep river traversed only by a few bridges in his rear.²

² Wilson,
152, 153.
Dum. xix.
7, 10. Jom.
ii. 412, 413.

The corps of Mortier arrived to the support of Lannes in a short time after the firing commenced, and both corps withdrew to the heights stretching from Posthenen to Heinrichsdorf, about three miles to the westward of the river Alle. Deeming these the only forces with which he had to contend, and considering himself adequate to their destruction, Benningsen drew up his whole forces as they successively arrived on the field from the bridges, in the narrow plain, backed by Friedland and the Alle, facing towards the westward, about half a mile in front of that town. The Mill Stream, flowing in a perpendicular direction to his line, nearly cut it in two equal parts; the right wing extended from the rivulet to the Alle, through the wood of Domerauer; the left, which was less considerable in length, stretched in a southerly direction also to the Alle, across the wood of Sortlack, and barring the roads of Eylau, Bartenstein, and Schippenheil, nearly at the point where they intersected each other. The whole army was drawn up in two lines facing to the west; the first and third battalions of each regiment, in battle array, composing the first line; the second, in close columns behind the intervals between them, forming the second. Thus the Russians stood on the arc of the segment of a circle formed by the river Alle in their rear. Only one division, of nine regiments and twelve squadrons of horse, remained on the right bank. Gortchakoff commanded the right wing, Bagrathion the left: Uvaroff and Gallitzin the cavalry of the right, Kollagriboff the horse on the left. After taking into view the losses in the preceding actions, and the large detachment, under Kamenskoi, to the right to the support of Lestocq, the whole force of the Russians, on both sides of the river, did not exceed fifty-five thousand men, of whom about ten thousand were cavalry. They were all brave and experienced soldiers, but exhausted by fatigue and want of sustenance for several days. Every man in the array was entirely exposed to fire, and every movement distinctly seen, while the enemy were for the most part concealed or sheltered by the woods and rising grounds which fringed the plain to the westward, and bounded the horizon on that side.¹

Even with this comparatively inconsiderable force,

CHAP.
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1807.

52.

Disposition
and arrange-
ment of the
Russian
army.
June 14.

¹ Wilson,
153, 155.
Dum. xix. 9,
11. Jom. ii.
411, 413.

CHAP.
XLVI.

1807.

53.

No decisive
success is
gained on
either side
before the
arrival of the
other French
corps.

however, the Russian general might, at least in the earlier part of the day, have gained considerable, perhaps decisive success, against the corps of Lannes and Mortier, which alone had come up to the field of battle, had he acted at once with the vigour and decision which the opportunity afforded, and the critical circumstances in which he was placed imperatively required. But, unfortunately, he was so prepossessed with the idea that he had no other antagonist to expect than the two corps actually on the spot, that the precious hours, big with the fate of Europe and the world, were allowed to elapse without any decided movement being attempted. Lannes gradually fell back from his ground in front of Friedland, as the successive divisions of the enemy crossed the bridges, and established themselves on the left bank of the river; skilfully availing himself, however, of every advantage which the inequalities of the ground afforded to retard the advance of the enemy, and covering his movements with a cloud of light troops, whose incessant fire concealed the real amount of his force. A severe action took place on the right, where a body of thirty French squadrons tried to turn the Russian right in front of Heinrichsdorf, and at first with some success; but the advance of some fresh regiments compelled the assailants to give ground in that quarter. Soon after a column of three thousand men advanced straight against Friedland: they were permitted to approach close to the Russian cannon without a single shot being fired, when suddenly the whole opened with grape, and with such effect, that in a few minutes a thousand men were struck down, the column routed, and an eagle was taken. Encouraged by this success, the Russians advanced their left wing, and drove back the French right with such vigour, that it was thought they were retiring altogether towards Eylau. But this success was of short duration: fresh reinforcements arrived to the enemy; the lost ground was regained; and a tremendous cannonade along the whole line announced that the other corps were arriving, and that a general battle was at hand.¹

¹ Dum. xix.
12, 14. Jom.
ii. 412. Wil-
son, 154, 156.

Napoleon was at Domnau, ten miles distant, when the first sound of distant cannon was heard. He immediately mounted on horseback, and rode rapidly forward to the

front, where the increasing cannonade and the quick rattle of musketry announced that a serious conflict was already engaged, despatching, at the same time, orders for the corps in the rear to hasten their march. About one o'clock in the afternoon he arrived on the heights behind Heinrichsdorf, which overlooked the field of battle, and immediately sent out the officers of his staff in different directions to observe the motions of the enemy. Savary speedily returned with information that the march of troops over the bridge of Friedland was incessant; that none were retracing their steps; that three additional bridges had been constructed to facilitate the passage; and that the masses in front were every minute increasing and extending themselves. "'Tis well!" replied the Emperor: "I am already prepared; I have gained an hour upon them, and since they wish it I will give them another. This is the anniversary of Marengo: the battle could not have been fought on a more propitious day." Orders were despatched for all the corps of infantry, as they came up, to concentrate themselves in the immense woods behind Heinrichsdorf, on the skirts of which Marshal Lannes was combating; the artillery alone was placed on the great roads leading from Eylau and Dornau; the cavalry in the large apertures which had been cut for the purposes of agriculture in these extensive forests. The firm countenance and dense masses of the enemy, who appeared even more numerous than they really were, as seen from the heights of Heinrichsdorf, at first made the Emperor doubtful whether he should not postpone the attack till the following day, when the remainder of the cavalry of Murat and the corps of Davoust might be expected to join from the side of Königsberg.^{1*} But the successive arrival of the corps of Ney and

CHAP.
XLVI.

1807.

54.

Preparatory
dispositions
and forces of
Napoleon.¹ Wilson,
155, 156.
Sav. iii. 53,
57. Dum. xix.
10, 17.

* Accordingly, at one o'clock, he wrote to that general from the field:—"The enemy is in battle array in front of Friedland, with all his army. At first he appeared desirous of moving on by Stocken on Königsberg; but now he appears only desirous of receiving battle on the ground he has chosen. I hope that by this time you have entered Königsberg: and as the corps of Soult is sufficient for the protection of that city, you will without doubt retrace your steps as rapidly as possible with the remainder of the cavalry and Davoust's corps towards Friedland. It is the more necessary that you should do so, as very possibly the affair may be protracted till to-morrow. Use your utmost efforts, therefore, to arrive here by one o'clock in the morning. If I perceive in the outset of the action that the enemy is in such strength as to render the result doubtful, it is possible that I may engage only in a cannonade to-day, and await your arrival before commencing serious operations."—JOMINI, ii. 414.

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XLVI.

1807.

55.
Order of
battle taken
up by the
French.

Victor,* with the infantry and cavalry of the Guard, and part of Murat's dragoons, at two and three o'clock, joined to the obvious and flagrant disadvantages of the enemy's position, induced him not to lose a moment in bringing matters to a decisive issue.

Orders were accordingly despatched for all the troops to prepare for action in an hour. Meanwhile the soldiers were ordered to sit down and rest themselves; while the most minute inspection took place in the ranks to see that the firelocks were in good condition, and the cartridge-boxes amply supplied. The order of battle was soon fixed. Ney occupied the right, directly in front of Friedland; next stood Mortier, on the extreme right of Lannes. In the second line Victor's corps was stationed immediately behind Ney: the Imperial Guard, with a numerous brigade of fusiliers, under the orders of Savary; and the cavalry, under Grouchy, Latour Maubourg, and Nansouty, behind the centre and right. The whole army was directed to advance in *échelon*, with the right in front and the left slightly thrown back; thus Ney would be first engaged; and the artillery received orders to redouble their fire along the whole line as soon as the heads of their columns were seen emerging from the woods. By four o'clock seventy thousand infantry and ten thousand horse were assembled, in the highest spirits and the finest state of discipline and equipment; while Benningsen, who, from seeing the formidable accumulation of forces in his front, and the losses he had sustained, had deemed it necessary to detach six thousand men to his rear to secure the bridge of Wehlau over the Pregel, had not more than forty thousand foot and eight thousand horse to oppose their attack.¹

¹ Sav. iii. 56,
58. Wilson,
155, 156.
Jom. ii. 413,
415. Dum.
xix. 10, 17.
Bign, vi. 301,
302.

56.
Battle of
Friedland.
Splendid
attack by
Ney's corps.

June 14.

The cessation of any serious attack for some hours after noon, led the Russian general, who had long since abandoned his original project of surprising Lannes, and was desirous only of maintaining his ground till the approach of night gave him the means of regaining, without molestation, the right bank of the Alle, to indulge a hope that nothing further would be undertaken during that day; but he was soon painfully undeceived. At five o'clock, on a signal given by a discharge of twenty

* Formerly commanded by Bernadotte, who had been wounded at Spandau.

pieces of cannon from the French centre, the whole army stood to their arms, and immediately the heads of Marshal Ney's column were seen emerging from the woods behind Posthenen, and rapidly advancing straight upon Friedland. On all sides the enemy's forces at once were seen; from the steeples of Friedland, through the interstices of the trees, or in the openings of the forest, they were descried in masses of enormous power and depth. From the plain, the horizon appeared to be bounded by a deep girdle of glittering steel. At one glance the most inexperienced could see the imminence and magnitude of the danger; for no preparations to cover the retreat over the Alle had been made, and the enemy's force appeared at least double that of the Russians. But there was no time for consultation or defensive measures. On came Ney's column with the fury of a tempest, driving before them, like foam before the waves, the Russian chasseurs of the Guard and several regiments of cavalry and Cossacks who were placed in advance, and had endeavoured to check their progress. Some regiments of militia, stationed on the low grounds near the Alle, also broke and fled towards the bridges, spreading confusion and alarm through the whole rear of the army. At the same time Victor's corps, placed at first in the second line, advanced to the ground originally occupied by Ney; and its artillery, consisting of forty pieces, under the command of General Senarmont, pushed on four hundred paces further, and from a rising ground thundered over the whole Russian line, so as effectually to prevent any succours being sent to the distressed left. That portion of their army was now every where shaken; the loud shouts of Ney's column were heard along the whole line; their advanced guards were close to Friedland, and, encouraged by this rapid and splendid success, they were already preparing to storm the town and complete the ruin of the enemy by gaining possession of the bridges in his rear.¹

At this instant the Russian Imperial Guard, which was placed in reserve behind the artificial lake to the north of Friedland, was ordered to advance. Immediately these noble troops rushed forward with fixed bayonets, not in compact order, yet with such vigour, that the

¹ Sav. iii. 58,
59. Dum. xix.
17, 19. Wil-
son, 159, 160.
Jom. ii. 417,
418. Bign. vi.
303, 304.

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XLVI.

1807.

57.
Gallant
charge of the
Russian
Guard nearly
regains the
day.1 Saalf,
Gesch. der
Krieg von
Nap. i. 644-7.
Wilson, 159,
160. Sav. iii.
58, 59. Jom.
ii. 418. Dum.
xix. 19, 21.58.
Progress of
the action on
the centre
and right of
the Russians.

leading divisions of Ney's corps, assailed in front and flank, were pierced through, trodden down, and driven back with prodigious slaughter. Such was the change produced by this vehement onset, that the day seemed all but regained; the French were repulsed to a considerable distance, and the Russian left wing in its turn became the assailants. Then it was that the six thousand men detached in the forenoon to Wehlau, might have changed the destinies of Europe. But the Russian Guards, being unsupported by any further reserve, could not singly maintain the contest for a length of time, with the overwhelming odds which were directed against them. As they hurried on in pursuit of Ney, they came upon the reserve under Victor, which had advanced to his support; and one of his divisions, under Dupont, charged them so opportunely in flank, while disordered by the vehemence of their pursuit, that they were in their turn repulsed to the edge of the town. Encouraged by this change of fortune, Ney's soldiers now returned to the charge. Dupont's division, emulating the deeds of its old comrades in the camp of Boulogne, pressed on in hot pursuit; Senarmont's terrific battery advanced, playing without intermission on the crowded ranks of the retiring Russians; and soon the confusion and press in Friedland appeared so great, that the leading French divisions were tempted to hazard an assault. After an obstinate resistance, the streets were forced; some of the principal buildings in the town took fire; in the first moments of consternation the fugitives applied the torch to the bridges over the river—in a few minutes they were wrapped in flames, and the volumes of smoke which rolled over the whole field of battle, spread a dismal feeling through the breasts of the soldiers.¹

While this decisive success was gaining on the left, the centre and right of the Russians kept their ground with undaunted firmness under a dreadful cannonade, which told with fatal effect on the dense masses which, from the limited extent of the ground, were there accumulated between the front and the river. They had even gained considerable success; for some battalions, having broken their array in crossing the deep ravine of the Mill Stream, with which they were unacquainted, were charged before

they could re-form by the Russian cavalry, and cut to pieces. But when the retreat of the left wing and the Guards had uncovered their flank, the infantry in the centre were exposed to the most serious danger, and must have given way, had not the Russian cavalry galloped forward at full speed and charged the corps who threatened them, who were the left of Oudinot's grenadiers, with such vigour that they were in a few minutes trampled under foot and destroyed. Encouraged by this success, the infantry of the centre also moved forward, and threw in so destructive a flanking fire, as effectually covered the retreat of their horse; but at this moment the flames of Friedland and the bridges were seen to arise, and the vast clouds of black smoke which darkened the atmosphere, told too plainly that their retreat was cut off, and that success was hopeless. Then indeed their hopes fell, and despair took possession of every heart. Still, however, their courage was unshaken: uniting the fronts of battalions, closing the ranks of the soldiers, they presented, in circumstances which seemed wellnigh desperate, an unbroken front to the enemy. In vain the artillery, approaching to half cannon-shot distance, ploughed through their dense array—in vain the French infantry threw in a destructive fire with ceaseless vigour—in vain the grenadiers of their Guard charged repeatedly with the shouts and confidence of victory; not one square was broken—not one gun was taken. Slowly and in solid order they retired, leisurely retracing their steps towards the river, keeping up an incessant rolling fire from the rear, which faced the enemy, and charging with the bayonet whenever hard pressed by their pursuers.* Whoever witnessed the conduct of that devoted host during these trying hours, must have felt that Russia,¹ if

¹ Wilson,
160, 161.
Sav. iii. 59.
Jom. ii. 418,
419. Dum.
xix. 20, 21.
Saalf, i. 646.

* “ But yet, though thick the shafts as snow,
Though charging knights like whirlwinds go,
Though bill-men ply the ghastly blow,
Unbroken was the ring;

* * * *

Each stepping where his comrade stood,
The instant that he fell.
No thought was there of dastard flight;
Link'd in the serried phalanx tight,
Groom fought like noble, squire like knight,
As fearlessly and well;
Till utter darkness closed her wing
O'er their thin host and wounded King.

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1807.

59.
Benningsen's
measures to
secure a
retreat.

adequately directed, was destined in the end to take the lead in the deliverance of Europe.

Benningsen, meanwhile, without losing his presence of mind in the general wreck, did all that prudence could suggest to repair the consequences of the error into which he had been drawn in the earlier part of the day. His first care was to discover a ford for the cannon, as Friedland was in the hands of the enemy, and the bridges were no longer passable by friend or foe. Happily some peasants pointed out one, where the great park of artillery might be got across. It was at once withdrawn, with the exception of a few pieces which fell into the enemy's hands, while the firm countenance of the infantry warded off the assault of his impetuous columns; but the water came up to the horses' middles, and what remained of the ammunition was utterly spoiled. A hundred guns were immediately after the passage planted on the right bank to retard the enemy; but so closely were the columns on the opposite sides intermingled, that it was dangerous to fire lest the balls should fall in the Russian lines. Meanwhile two of their divisions, impatient of the slow progress at the ford, and unable to endure any longer the incessant showers of musketry and grape, threw themselves, sword in hand, into Friedland, and endeavoured to open a passage with fixed bayonets to the bridge. A desperate struggle ensued with the troops of Ney and Victor in the streets; but the despair of the Russians prevailed over the enthusiasm of the French, and they made their way through the burning houses to the water's edge. There, however, they found the bridges destroyed; and these brave men, after having so heroically cut their way through the hostile ranks, found themselves stopped by an impassable

Then skill'd *Napoleon's* sage commands
Led back from strife his shatter'd bands;
And from the charge they drew,
As mountain-waves from wasted lands
Sweep back to ocean blue.
Then did their loss his foemen know;
Their chiefs, their lords, their mightiest low,
They melted from the field as snow,
When streams are swoln and south winds blow,
Dissolves in silent dew.
Alle's echoes heard the ceaseless plash,
While many a broken band
Disorder'd through her currents dash,
To gain the *Russian* land."

Marmion, Canto vi.

barrier, while the increasing masses of the enemy now enclosed them, amidst fire and darkness, on every side. Still, however, no one thought, even in circumstances all but desperate, of surrender; with heroic courage they fought their way back, though with prodigious slaughter, to the ford, and during the darkness of the night plunged into the stream. The water was breast-high, and many, missing the fords, were drowned; several guns were abandoned, from the impossibility of dragging them through the press; but such was the unconquerable valour of the rearguard to the very last, that not one battalion capitulated, and, with the exception of five thousand wounded, few prisoners fell into the enemy's hands.^{1*}

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¹ Saalf, i. 647-8. Wilson, 159, 161. Jom. ii. 419, 421. Dum. xix. 19, 23. Sav. iii. 59. Bign. vi. 304, 305.

Such was the disastrous battle of Friedland, which at one blow dissolved the great confederacy which the genius and foresight of Mr Pitt had formed for the coercion of Napoleon's ambition, and left Great Britain alone to maintain the contest with the whole force of the Continent arrayed under his banners. Grievously, then, was felt the want of British aid, and woful were the consequences of the ill-timed parsimony which had withheld all subsidies from Russia during this desperate struggle. Thirty thousand of the militia, whom even a small loan would have clothed and armed, might have averted the catastrophe; twenty thousand British auxiliaries would have converted it into a glorious victory, and thrown Napoleon back upon the Vistula and the Elbe. The losses of the Russians, though nothing like what they had experienced in the decisive overthrow of Austerlitz, were still very severe. Seventeen thousand men had fallen, either killed or wounded, and five thousand of the latter had been made prisoners; but of those unhurt not more than five hundred had become captives; no colours were taken, and only seventeen guns remained in the enemy's power.² The French had lost ten thousand

60.

Immense results of the battle.

² Wilson, 163. Dum. xix. 21, 23. Jom. ii. 420, 421. 79th Bull. Camp. de Saxe, iv. 334. Sav. iii. 59, 60.

* In describing this battle, Lord Hutchinson, who witnessed it, stated, in his official despatches to the British government,—“I want words sufficiently strong to describe the valour of the Russians, and which alone would have rendered their success undoubted, if courage alone could secure victory; but whatever may be the event, the officers and men of the Russian army have done their duty in the noblest manner, and are justly entitled to the praise and admiration of every person who was witness of their conduct.”—LORD HUTCHINSON'S *Despatch*, June 15, 1807; SIR ROBERT WILSON, 162.

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men, and two eagles wrested from them in fair combat. Nothing can illustrate more clearly the desperate resistance made by the Russians than the small number of guns taken, under circumstances when, with less steady troops, the whole artillery would have been abandoned.*

61.
The Russians
retreat with-
out molesta-
tion to Allen-
berg and
Wehlau.
June 15.

During the evening, the right wing of the Russians and part of the cavalry retired by the left bank of the Alle, and crossed without molestation at the bridge of Allenberg. Thither, on the morning after the battle, the remainder of the army retired by the other bank, without being at all harassed on the march; indeed, it is a remarkable and unaccountable circumstance, that though fifteen thousand French horse were in the field, they were little engaged in the action after Napoleon arrived on the spot, nor once let loose in the pursuit.† On the day following they reached Wehlau, where the Alle and the Pregel unite in the midst of a marshy plain, traversed by a single chaussée. By that defile, not only the artillery and carriages of the main army, but the immense baggage and ammunition-train, which had evacuated Königsberg, had to pass; and although no enemy was in sight, yet such was the confusion produced by the enormous accumulation of cannon and chariots on a single chaussée, and such the apprehensions inspired by the evident dangers which would ensue if the rearguard were to be attacked, that, on a few muskets being accidentally discharged, a general panic took place, and horse, foot, and cannon rushed tumultuously together to the bridge, and the strongest throwing down and trampling under foot the weaker, broke through and spread in the wildest disorder into the town. Such was the uproar and con-

June 16.

* The French say in the bulletins, that they took eighty pieces of cannon; that the Russians had 18,000 killed, and that they lost on their own side only 500 killed and 3000 wounded. Berthier estimated the real loss at Tilsit to Sir R. Wilson at more than 8000; and that officer makes the Russian loss only 12,000 men. The latter estimate, however, is obviously too low, as the peace which immediately followed demonstrated; the account in the bulletin was, as usual, from a third to a fourth of its real amount. 79 *Bulletin. Camp. de Saxe*, iv. 334; and WILSON, 163.

† "The Russians had on their right twenty-two squadrons of cavalry, who covered their retreat; we had more than forty with which we should have charged them, but by a fatality without example, these forty squadrons received no orders, and never so much as mounted their horses; they remained during all the battle on foot behind our left. On seeing that, I lamented the Grand-duke of Berg had not been there; if he had, these forty squadrons would certainly have been employed, and not a Russian would have escaped."—SAVARY, iii. 60.

sternation which ensued, that it was with the utmost difficulty that order could be restored by the personal efforts of Sir Robert Wilson and a few Russian officers who happened to be on the spot; and it inspired these gallant chiefs with the melancholy conviction, that if Napoleon had followed up his success with his wonted vigour, the Russian host would have been utterly annihilated.* But on this occasion, as on many others in the memorable campaign of 1812, it was apparent that the vigour of the Emperor in following up his victories was by no means proportioned, either to what it had been in the German or Italian wars, or to the successes which he claimed at the moment: a circumstance for which his panegyrists find it impossible to offer any explanation, but which, in truth, is susceptible of a very easy solution, when the desperate nature of the resistance opposed to him in these northern latitudes, and the consequent magnitude of his losses, is taken into consideration.¹

¹ Wilson,
164, 165.
Dum. xix.
34, 35.

The catastrophe at Friedland, and subsequent retreat of the Allies behind the Pregel, rendered the city of Königsberg, which was situated considerably in advance of that river, on the left bank or front of its course, no longer tenable. General Lestocq had, with his wonted ability, conducted the retreat of his little army with very trifling loss, till he was joined on the 12th, in front of Königsberg, by the corps of Kamenskoi. Even their united forces, however, not more than twenty-four thousand strong, could hardly hope to save that town without the assistance of the main army, when they were attacked by the corps of Soult and Davoust, and the greater part of the cavalry under Murat, amounting to full fifty thousand men, of whom above twelve thousand were horse in the finest condition. Notwithstanding this overwhelming odds, however, the Prussian general made the attempt, and by the firm countenance which he assumed, and the devoted heroism of his rearguard in the retreat from the lower Passarge, succeeded in so far retarding the enemy as to

62.
Capture of
Königsberg.
June 16.

* “Et si continuo victorem ea cura subisset,
Ultimus ille dies bello gentique fuisset.”

In the first alarm, the Cossacks crowded down to the right bank of the Alle, and swimming the river, advanced on the opposite side and discharged a *volley of arrows* with considerable effect at the enemy.—WILSON, 163, 165.

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1807.

June 14.

June 15.

June 16.

¹ Wilson,
167, 169.
Dum. xix.
33, 36.

gain time for the evacuation of almost all the magazines and stores in the city, even by the narrow and crowded defile of Wehlau. But this great object was not gained without sustaining a considerable loss. A battalion was surrounded and made prisoners, which had been left to defend the passage of the Frisching; and on the following day a column of twelve hundred men, which was enveloped by St Cyr's division and Murat's cavalry, was, after a gallant resistance, compelled to surrender. Weakened by these losses, Lestocq, however, still maintained his ground in Königsberg, repeatedly repulsed the attempts to storm it which were made by the Brandenburg gate, and remained there all the day, putting the mouldering fortifications in a respectable posture of defence, and pressing the evacuation of the magazines. But on the following morning, having received accounts of the battle of Friedland, he ordered the garrison to be under arms, under pretence of making a sally; and when evening approached, the whole took the direction of Labian and the Pregel, leaving General Sutterheim with two battalions of light infantry to man the walls. He also evacuated the place at midnight, and on the following day the magistrates sent the keys of the city to Marshal Soult. Three thousand sick or wounded fell into the hands of the enemy; but such was the activity of General Lestocq, and the skill with which Sutterheim conducted his measures, that no magazines or stores of any importance were taken; and the rearguard, though frequently molested, effected its retreat, without any serious loss, to Wehlau, where they joined the main army as it was defiling over the bridge.^{1*}

* Napoleon, with his usual mendacious policy, gave out, in his 79th bulletin, that he had taken in Königsberg, not only twenty thousand prisoners and immense public magazines, but 160,000 British stand of arms! It appeared a happy stroke to make the Parisians believe that the tardy succours of Great Britain had arrived just in time to arm the French troops. "This assertion," Sir R. Wilson justly observes, "is a falsehood of the most extravagant character, and which finds no parallel but in the catalogue of their own compositions." In truth, the British arms escaped by a circumstance more discreditable to England than the falsehood which Napoleon asserted; they had not yet arrived. The cannon, ammunition, and arms for Prussia were sent by Lord Hutchinson, after the armistice, to a Swedish port; those for Russia were landed at Riga, and delivered to the Russian troops.—*Parl. Returns*, 1807; *Parl. Hist.* ix. App.; and WILSON, 167. The falsehood in regard to the stores taken at Königsberg appeared in the bulletin giving the details of the battle of Friedland, dated Wehlau, June 17, the very day on which that town was taken by the French

Meanwhile Napoleon, after his usual custom, rode on the following morning over the field of battle. It presented a ghastly spectacle, second only to the terrific plain of Eylau in circumstances of horror. Then might be seen evident proofs of the stern and unconquerable valour with which the Russians had combated. The position of the squares of infantry could be distinctly traced by the dead bodies of the men, which, lying on their backs facing outwards, still preserved their regular array; the station of the cavalry was seen by the multitude of horses, which lay dead as they had stood in squadrons on the field. In the pursuit, however, he exerted none of his usual vigour, and threw away, in the prosecution of a minor object, the fairest opportunity he had ever enjoyed of destroying the Russian army. Intent only on cutting the enemy off from Königsberg, and securing to himself that noble prize of victory, he totally neglected the following up of his success on the right bank of the Alle, and suffered the disorganised and shattered Russian army to retire without molestation through the narrow defile that penetrated the marshes of Wehlau and over the single bridge of the Pregel, when a little additional vigour in the pursuit would at least have compelled them to abandon, at the entrance of these passes, the greater part of their baggage and artillery. On the evening of the 18th, the Allied army, which had united at Wehlau with the troops under Kamen-

CHAP.
XLVI.
1807.
63.
Measures of
Napoleon,
and retreat of
the Russians
to the
Niemen.

June 18.

troops. He there said, " Marshal Soult has entered Königsberg; where we found many hundred thousand quintals of wheat, more than twenty thousand Russians and Prussians wounded, and all the military stores which England had sent out; among the rest, 160,000 muskets, still on shipboard." This fabrication was made at Wehlau on the 17th, which is thirty miles from Königsberg, before it *was possible* that any thing further than the bare capture of the city could have been heard of by the French Emperor. The falsehood in the first bulletin, which corresponded to his wishes rather than the reality, was so gross, that it could not be repeated in the succeeding one, dated Tilsit, 19th June, which, after recapitulating the successes of Soult and the fall of Königsberg, said, " In fine, the result of all these affairs has been, that four or five thousand prisoners, and fifteen pieces of cannon, have fallen into our hands. Two hundred Russian vessels, and great stores of subsistence, wine, and spirits, have been found in Königsberg." Yet so little do the French writers attend to accuracy in their detail, that the enormous falsehood in the first bulletin, even when abandoned by the second, has been adopted by all their historians, even Jomini and Dumas, whose accuracy is in general so praiseworthy.—See DUM. xiv. 33; and JOM. ii. 422; and 79th and 80th Bullet. Camp de Saxe, iv. 338, 342, and BIGN. vi. 308; and NORVINS, iii. 27.

CHAP.
XLVI.
1807.

June 19.

¹ Wilson,
168, 170.
Dum. xix. 35,
40. Bign. vi.
508, 509.

TILSIT on the Niemen, and early on the following morning the mighty array began to defile over the bridge. For forty hours successively the passage continued without intermission; horse, foot, cannon, baggage-waggons, store-chariots, succeeding each other in endless array: it seemed as if the east was swallowing up the warlike brood which had so long contended with the west for the mastery of Europe. Still, though a hundred thousand men, flushed with victory, were hardly a day's march in the rear, no attempt was made by Napoleon to molest their passage. A few cannon-shots alone were exchanged between the Cossacks and the horse artillery of Murat, which, on the morning of the 20th, approached the town of Tilsit, which was shortly after evacuated by Bagrathion with the Russian rearguard, who withdrew without molestation across the river, and burned the bridge.¹

64.
The Emperor
Alexander
proposes an
armistice.
June 20.

In truth, hostilities were no longer either required or expedient. Disheartened by the defeat which he had experienced; chagrined at the refusal of succours either in men or money from England; irritated at the timid policy of Austria, when the fairest opportunity that ever yet had occurred was presented for her decisive interposition; foiled in the objects for which he had originally begun the war, and deserted by those for whose advantage, more than his own, it had been undertaken, the Emperor Alexander had taken his resolution. He deemed it unnecessary and improper to risk the independence of Russia in a quarrel not directly affecting its interests, and from which the parties immediately concerned had withdrawn. On the 18th, therefore, General Benningsen wrote a letter to Prince Bagrathion, desiring him to make known to the French generals the Emperor's desire for an armistice. This was accordingly communicated to Murat, on the forenoon of the following day, and orders were immediately transmitted for hostilities to cease at all points. Thus was this mighty conflagration, which originally commenced on the banks of the Danube, finally stilled on the shores of the Niemen.^{2*}

June 19.

² Wilson,
170, 171.
Dum. xix.
42, 44.

* During this desperate struggle on the Passarge, a conflict of some importance, but overlooked amidst the shock of such mighty hosts, took place on the banks of the Narew. Tolstoy had there gained some successes over Mas-

These proposals on the part of the Russian Emperor gave the highest satisfaction to Napoleon. It had ever been his policy to offer peace to his enemies during the first tumult and consternation of defeat; and more than once, by such well-timed advances, he had extricated himself from a situation of the utmost peril. To be anticipated in this manner in his desires, and have the public demonstration afforded of the reality of his victory by the enemy proposing an armistice, was a circumstance of all others the most gratifying, which raised him at once to the highest point of glory. He was not ignorant that here, as at Leoben and Austerlitz, a further continuance of the contest might be attended with very serious dangers. England, it is true, had hitherto, in an unaccountable manner, kept herself secluded from the struggle: but a change had taken place in her councils; a close alliance had been contracted with Prussia; powerful succours in arms and ammunition were on their way, and the greatest military expedition she had ever sent forth was preparing to hoist the flag of a national war on the banks of the Elbe. The dubious policy of Austria rendered it more than probable that in such an event she would throw off the mask; and that eighty thousand armed mediators might suddenly make their appearance under the walls of Dresden, and totally intercept the communications of the Grand Army with France. Russia, it was true, was defeated; the army of Bagrathion was little more than half its former amount; but thirty thousand men were advancing, under Prince Labanoff, to repair its losses; and if its frontiers were invaded, and a national resistance aroused, there were four hundred thousand militia enrolled, who would speedily fill the ranks of the regular army. Napoleon indeed could collect, notwithstanding the losses of the short campaign, a hundred and fifty thousand men on the Niemen; but even this mighty host appeared hardly adequate to the task of subduing an empire whose dominions on this side of the Ural Mountains exceeded all the rest of Europe put

CHAP.
XLVI.

1807.

65.

Reasons
which made
Napoleon re-
joice at this
step.

sena, and in particular made himself master of the intrenched camp of Borki; but the French having attacked it some days after with increased forces, it again fell into their hands, and the Russians, following the retreat of their principal army, had retired from Ostrolenka towards Ticoizin, when the armistice of Tilsit put a period to their operations.—DUMAS, xix. 41, 43.

June 11.
June 15.

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1807.

¹ Hard. ix.
426.66.
Considera-
tions which
rendered the
Russians also
desirous of an
accommoda-
tion.

together. How were the conquered provinces to be kept in subjection; the fortresses taken garrisoned; the immense lines of communication kept up, when the war was to *commence* at the distance of nearly a thousand miles from the Rhine, and the Scythian monarch, if resolute on preserving his independence, might retreat a thousand miles farther without coming to the verge of his European dominions? ¹*

Nor were the considerations less powerful which induced Alexander to desire an accommodation. By engaging in the war on this desperate principle, indeed, and drawing the enemy into the heart of his dominions, he had every chance of defeating the invasion of this second Darius into the deserts of Scythia; but this could only be done by great sacrifices, and at the hazard of throwing back for a long period the internal improvement of his rising dominions. For what object were these sacrifices to be made? For the preservation of Prussia? She was already crushed, and a few inconsiderable forts, with the town of Graudentz, were all that remained to Frederick William of the dominions of his illustrious ancestors. For the safety of England? She was sufficiently protected by her invincible fleets; and the interest she had evinced in the struggle had not been such as to render it imperative on the Czar, either in honour or policy, to continue the contest on her account.†

* The following regular forces, exclusive of 400,000 militia, were still at the command of the Russian government:—

Remains of the army which fought at Friedland, . . .	28,000
Kamenskoi's corps,	9,000
Reinforcements which joined at Tilsit, or on march, . . .	9,000
Half of Labanoff's corps, at Olita,	15,000
Prussians retired with Lestocq,	18,000
Tolstoy's corps on the Narew,	18,000
On march from Wilna,	15,000
Total regulars,	112,000

—WILSON, 176.

† The secret motives which induced the Emperor Alexander to conclude the treaty of Tilsit, were the refusal by Lord Howick (afterwards Earl Grey) to guarantee the Russian subsidies, and that too in a manner peculiarly painful to the feelings of the Emperor—a refusal the more inexplicable, as that minister was the very person who had, after the catastrophe of Jena, warmly solicited the Czar to fly to the succour of Prussia; the delay in the arrival of the troops promised by England in the island of Rugen; the tardiness of the new administration in furnishing the promised supplies in money, arms, and ammunition—circumstances which had strongly irritated him against the English government; the refusal of Austria to accede to the convention of Bartenstein, or take any part in the contest; as well as the exhaustion of his own finances, the penury of arms and ammunition, the famishing state of the troops, and the risk of total overthrow to which they were exposed.—HARDENBERG, ix. 425; and LUCCHESINI, i. 322, 323.

For the sake of the balance of power? That was an object, however important, which could not be brought about by the unaided efforts of a single empire; and if Austria, whose interests were more immediately concerned in its preservation, was not inclined to draw the sword in the conflict, it did not appear that Russia, whose independence had never yet been seriously threatened, was called upon to continue it unaided, for its restoration. Now was an opportunity when the war might be terminated, if not with advantage, at least without dishonour. In the fields of Pultusk, Eylau, and Heilsberg, the Russians had sufficiently vindicated their title to military glory; and objects of immediate importance were to be gained nearer home, both on the Danube and the Neva, amply sufficient to indemnify the empire for a temporary withdrawal from the general theatre of European strife.¹

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XLVI.
1807.

When such were the dispositions on both sides, there was little difficulty in coming to an understanding. France had nothing to demand of Russia except that she should close her ports against England; Russia nothing to ask of France but that she should withdraw her armies from Poland, and permit the Emperor to pursue his long-cherished projects of conquest in Turkey. The map of Europe lay before them, out of which these two mighty potentates might carve at pleasure ample indemnities for themselves, or acquisitions for their allies. No difficulty, in consequence, was experienced in settling the terms of the armistice; the Niemen separated the two armies; the headquarters of Napoleon were fixed at Tilsit, on the left bank of the river; those of Alexander at Piktupohen, a mile distant on the right bank. A friendly intercourse was immediately established between the officers and men of the two armies; they had felt each other's valour too strongly not to be inspired with sentiments of mutual respect: while Napoleon, in eloquent terms, addressed his soldiers on this glorious termination of their labours in one of those proclamations which made Europe thrill from side to side.² *

¹ Boutour-
lin, Camp.
de 1812, i. 21,
22. Hard. ix.
Lucches. i.
322, 323.

67.
Conclusion of
an armistice.

June 22.
² Bign. vi.
308, 312.
Dum. xix.
44, 50.

* "Soldiers!—On the 5th June we were attacked in our cantonments by the Russian army; the enemy misunderstood the cause of our inactivity. He has learned, when it was too late, that our slumber was that of the lion; he now

CHAP.
XLVI.
1807.
68.
Interview on
the raft at
Tilsit.

June 25.

An armistice having been thus concluded, it was agreed that the two Emperors should meet to arrange, in a private conference, the destinies of the world. It took place, accordingly, on the 25th, under circumstances eminently calculated to impress the imagination of mankind. By the direction of the French general of engineers, Lariboissière, a raft of great dimensions was constructed on the river Niemen; *the raft of Tilsit*, which will be recollected as long as the cage of Bajazet or the phalanx of Alexander. It was moored in the centre of the stream, and on its surface stood a wooden apartment, surmounted by the eagles of France and Russia, framed with all the possible magnificence which the time and circumstances would admit. This was destined for the reception of the Emperors alone; at a little distance was stationed another raft, richly, but less sumptuously adorned, for their respective suites. The shore on either side was covered with the Imperial Guard of the two monarchs, drawn up in triple lines, in the same firm and imposing array in which they had stood on the fields of Eylau and Friedland. At one o'clock precisely, amidst the thunder of artillery, each Emperor stepped into a boat on his own side of the river, accompanied by a few of his principal officers: Napoleon was attended by Murat, Berthier, Bessières, Duroc, and Caulaincourt; Alexander by the Grand-duke Constantine, General Benningsen, Prince Labanoff, General Ouvaroff, and Count Lieven. The numerous and splendid suite of each monarch followed in another boat immediately after.¹

¹ Savary, iii.
76. Bign. vi.
315. Dum.
xix. 53, 54.

Napoleon's
proclamation
thereon to his
troops.

The bark of Napoleon, rowed by the marines of his

repents having forgotten it. In the days of Guttstadt, of Heilsberg, in the ever memorable field of Friedland, in a ten days' campaign in short, we have taken 120 pieces of cannon, 7 standards, killed or wounded 60,000 Russians, wrested from the enemy's army all its magazines and hospitals, the fortress of Königsberg, with three hundred vessels which it contained, loaded with munitions of war of all sorts, and especially 160,000 muskets sent by England to arm our enemies. From the shores of the Vistula we have arrived on those of the Niemen with the rapidity of the eagle. You celebrated at Austerlitz the anniversary of my coronation; but you have this year worthily commemorated that of Marengo, which terminated the war of the second coalition. Frenchmen, you are worthy of yourselves, *and of me*. You will return to your country covered with laurels, after having gained a peace which will be its own guarantee. It is time that our country should live in repose, sheltered from the malignant influence of England. My benefactions to you shall testify the large measure of my gratitude, and the whole extent of the love which I bear you." Already was to be seen, not merely in Napoleon's thoughts, but in his words, a return to the celebrated maxim of Louis XIV., "L'état—c'est moi."—BIGNON, vi. 311, 312.

Guard, advanced with greater rapidity than that of Alexander. He arrived first at the raft, entered the apartment, and himself opened the door on the opposite side to receive the Czar, while the shouts of the soldiers on either shore drowned even the roar of the artillery. In a few seconds Alexander arrived, and was received by the conqueror at the door on his own side. Their meeting was friendly, and the very first words which the Russian emperor uttered bespoke both the lacerated feelings occasioned by the conduct of the government of Great Britain during the war, his deep penetration, and clear conception of the ruling passion of Napoleon—"I hate the English," said he, "as much as you do, and am ready to second you in all your enterprises against them." "In that case," replied Napoleon, "every thing will be easily arranged, and peace is already made." The interview lasted two hours, during which Napoleon exercised all the ascendant which his extraordinary talents and fortune, as well as singular powers of fascination gave him, while the Russian Emperor gave proof of the tact and finesse, as well as diplomatic ability, with which his nation beyond any other in Europe is gifted. Before they parted, the outlines of the treaty were arranged between them: it was not difficult to come to an understanding—the world afforded ample room for the aggrandisement of both.¹*

CHAP.
XLVI.

1807.

69.

First words
of Napoleon
and Alex-
ander.¹ Savary, iii.
76, 77. Bign.
vi. 315, 316.
Dum. xix.
53, 55.

On the day following, a second interview took place at the same town, at which the King of Prussia was present: the first had been arranged, and the preliminary terms agreed to, without any concert with that unhappy prince. He was no longer in a situation to stipulate any conditions; bereft of his dominions, driven up into a corner of his territories, destitute of every thing, he had no alternative but submission to the stern law of the

70.

Commence-
ment of the
negotiations
at Tilsit.
June 26.

* Savary, who had been nominated governor of Königsberg, received orders, when the French army first approached the Niemen, to get a pontoon train, which had been left in the arsenal of that city, ready for immediate operation. Next day, however, he received the following significant note from Talleyrand:—"Be in no hurry with your pontoons: what would we gain by passing the Niemen? what is there to be acquired beyond that river? The Emperor must *abandon his ideas in regard to Poland*; that nation is fit for nothing; disorder alone is to be organised among its inhabitants. *We have another far more important matter to settle*; here is a fair opportunity of terminating the present dispute; we must not let it escape." Already the Spanish invasion had entered into the calculations of the rulers of Europe on the Niemen.—SAVARY, iii. 76.

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1807.

conqueror.* As it was now evident that an accommodation was about to take place, arrangements were made for conducting it with more convenience to the exalted personages concerned. Part of the town of Tilsit was declared neutral, and allotted to the accommodation of the Emperor of Russia and his suite; thither he repaired on the afternoon of the same day, and was received with all imaginable courtesy by Napoleon himself, upon landing on the left bank of the river from his boat. Amidst discharges of artillery, and the acclamations of a vast multitude of spectators, whom the extraordinary spectacle had collected together, did these two sovereigns, whose hostility had so lately dyed the fields of Poland with blood, ride side by side to the quarters prepared for the Czar, through a triple line of the French Imperial Guard. The attention of Napoleon descended to the most minute particulars. The furniture in the Emperor of Russia's rooms was all sent from the French headquarters; a sumptuous train of cooks and other attendants was in readiness to make him forget the luxuries of St Petersburg; even his couch was prepared in a camp bed of the French Emperor's, which he had made use of in his campaigns. The King of Prussia also arrived, two days after, in Tilsit, with his beautiful and unfortunate queen; and the ministers on both sides—Talleyrand on the part of France, Prince Kourakin on that of Russia, and Marshal Kalkreuth on that of Prussia. But they were of little service, for such was the extraordinary length to which the intimacy of the two Emperors had gone, that not only did they invariably dine and pass the evening together, but almost all the morning conferences, during which the destinies of the world were arranged, were conducted by themselves in person.¹

¹ Savary, iii. 77, 78. Bign. vi. 316, 317. Dum. xix. 55,

“Had the Queen of Prussia arrived earlier at our conferences,” says Napoleon, “it might have had much influence on the result of the negotiations; but happily

* At this period he wrote to the King of Sweden—“Immediately after the armistice, my imperial ally concluded peace on his own account alone. Abandoned in this manner, and left without support on the great theatre of war, I found myself forced, how painful soever to my feelings, to do the same, and to sign a peace, though its conditions were to the last degree hard and overwhelming.”—SCHÖELL, viii. 410; and LUCCHESINI, i. 328.

she did not make her appearance till all was settled, and I was in a situation to decide every thing in twenty-four hours. As soon as she arrived I went to pay her a visit: she was very beautiful, but somewhat past the first flower of youth. She received me in despair, exclaiming, 'Justice! Justice!' and throwing herself back with loud lamentations. I at length prevailed on her to take a seat, but she continued, nevertheless, her pathetic entreaties. 'Prussia,' said she, 'was blinded in regard to her power; she ventured to enter the lists with a hero, oppose herself to the destinies of France, neglect its fortunate friendship! she has been well punished for her folly: the glory of the Great Frederick, the halo his name spread round our arms, had inflated the heart of Prussia—they have caused her ruin.'" Magdeburg, in an especial manner, was the object of her entreaties; and when Napoleon, before dinner, presented her with a beautiful rose, she at first refused it, but immediately after took it with a smile, adding at the same time, "Yes! but at least with Magdeburg."—"I must observe to your majesty," replied the Emperor, "that it is I who give, and you only who must receive." Napoleon had the talents of Cæsar, but not the chivalry of Henry IV. "After all," said he, "a fine woman and gallantry are not to be weighed against affairs of state." He had frequently, during the repast, found himself hard pressed by the talent and grace of the Queen, and he resolved to cut the matter short. When she had retired, he sent for Talleyrand and Prince Kourakin, arranged the few remaining points of difference, and signed the treaty. The Queen was violently affected next day, when she learned that all was concluded; she refused to see the Emperor, and loudly protested she had been deceived by him—an assertion which he positively denies, and which his intellectual character, inaccessible to gallantry or female influence, though very warm so far as sense is concerned, rendered highly improbable. At length she was prevailed on by Alexander to be again present at dinner; and when Napoleon conducted her down stairs, after it was over, she stopped in the middle, pressed his hand as he bade her farewell, and said, "Is it possible that, after having had the good fortune to be so near to the Hero of the Age,¹ he has not left me the satisfaction

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XLVI.

1807.

71.

Napoleon's
interview
with the
Queen of
Prussia.¹ Las Cas. iv.
224, 228.

CHAP.
XLVI.

1807.

72.
Napoleon's
character of
the Queen of
Prussia.

of being able to assure him that he has attached me to him for life?" "Madame," replied the Emperor, "I lament if it is so; it is the effect of my evil destiny." They separated, never again to meet in this world.

"The Queen of Prussia," said Napoleon, "unquestionably possessed talents, great information, and singular acquaintance with affairs; she was the real sovereign for fifteen years. In truth, in spite of my address and utmost efforts, she constantly led the conversation, returned at pleasure to her subject, and directed it as she chose; but still with so much tact and delicacy that it was impossible to take offence. And in truth it must be confessed, that the objects at stake were of infinite importance; the time short and precious. One of the high contracting parties frequently repeated to me, that I should forgive every thing or nothing at all; but I answered that I had done every thing in my power to put things in such a train. The King of Prussia requested an interview that very day to take leave: I put it off for twenty-four hours, at the secret solicitation of Alexander: he never forgave me that postponement. I discovered in all our conversations that the violation of the territory of Anspach, during the advance to Ulm, had been the original cause of his irritation. In all our subsequent interviews, how great soever may have been the interests of the moment, he abandoned them without hesitation, to prove to me that I had really broken in upon his dominions, on that occasion. He was wrong; but still I must allow his indignation was that of an honest man."¹*

¹ Las Cas. iv.
228, 230.

* "Almost every day at Tilsit the two Emperors and King of Prussia rode out together; but this mark of confidence led to no good result. The Prussians could not conceal how much they suffered at seeing it; Napoleon rode in the middle between the two sovereigns, but the King could hardly keep pace with the two Emperors, or deemed himself *de trop* in their *tête-à-tête*, and generally fell behind. When we returned, the two Emperors dismounted in a moment; but they had generally to wait till the King came up, which caused them to be frequently wet, to the great annoyance of the spectators, as the weather was rainy at the time. That incident was the more annoying, as Alexander's manners are full of grace, and fully on a level with the highest elegance which the saloons of Paris can exhibit. He was sometimes fatigued with his companion, whose chagrin was so evident that it damped our satisfaction. We broke up in consequence our dinner parties at an early hour, under pretence of business at home; but Alexander and I remained behind to take tea together, and generally prolonged the conversation till past midnight."—LAS CASES, iv. 228, 230. Every thing conspires to indicate, that at this period the Emperor Alexander was completely dazzled by the grandeur and fascination of Napoleon, and that, under the influence of these feelings, he entirely forgot the interests and misfortunes of his unfortunate ally.—SAVARY, iv. 92, note.

The Russians at Tilsit did not consider themselves as vanquished; on the contrary, they felt, after all their misfortunes, much of the exultation of victory. Proud of having so long arrested the progress of the conqueror of the world, glorying even in the amount of their losses and the chasms in the ranks, which told the desperate strife in which they had been engaged, they mingled with their recent enemies with feelings unlacerated by the humiliations of defeat. It was obvious that peace was equally necessary to both Emperors; it was soon whispered that it was to be concluded on terms eminently favourable to the Russian empire. The utmost cordiality, in consequence, soon prevailed between the officers and soldiers of the two armies; fêtes and repasts were interchanged in rapid succession, given by the warriors so recently hostile to each other. In these entertainments the officers of the two Imperial Guards, and in particular Prince Murat and the Grand-duke Constantine, were peculiarly cordial and complimentary to each other. On one of these occasions, to such a length did the effusions of mutual respect and regard proceed, that the officers of the two Guards, amidst the fumes of wine and the enthusiasm of the moment, mutually exchanged their uniforms; French hearts beat under the decorations won amidst the snows of Eylau, and Russian bosoms warmed beneath the orders bestowed on the field of Austerlitz. Last and most singular effect of civilised life and military discipline, to strengthen at once the fierceness of national passions and the bonds by which they are to be restrained, and join in fraternal brotherhood one day those hands which, on another, had been dyed by mutual slaughter, or lifted up in relentless hostility against each other!¹

In the course of their rides together, the two Emperors had frequent opportunities of observing the flower of their respective armies. Napoleon afterwards acknowledged that he had never seen any thing which impressed him so much as the appearance of one of the regiments of the Russian Guard. Albeit noways an admirer of the rigid formality of German tactics, and trusting rather to the effect of proclamations on the spirits of his troops than the influence of discipline on their movements, he was inexpressibly struck with the military aspect of its

CHAP.
XLVI.

1807.

73.

Convivialities
between the
Russian and
French
officers.¹ Bign. vi.
317, 318.

74.

Napoleon's
admiration of
the Russian
Imperial
Guard.

CHAP.
XLVI.

1807.

¹ Jom. ii.
423, 424.75.
Treaty of
Tilsit. Its
leading pro-
visions.
Creation of
the Grand-
duchy of
Warsaw, and
kingdom of
Westphalia.
July 7 and 9.

Art. 5.

Art. 9.

Art. 6.

Art. 7.

Art. 8.

soldiers, and could not avoid the conclusion, that an army thus constituted would be the first in the world, if, to the firmness and precision which it had already attained, it should come to unite the fire and enthusiasm of the French. The docility with which they submitted to the orders they received, whatever they were, struck him as particularly admirable. "My soldiers," said he, "are as brave as it is possible to be, but they are too much addicted to reasoning on their position. If they had the impassable firmness and docility of the Russians, the world would be too small for their exploits. The French soldiers are too much attached to their country to play the part of the Macedonians."¹

After a fortnight of conference, the treaty of Tilsit, which had been agreed on as to its leading articles in the first four days after the armistice, was formally signed and published to the world. The first treaty between France and Russia was signed on the 7th; the second between France and Prussia, on the 9th of July. By the first, the Emperor Napoleon, as a mark of his regard for the *Emperor of Russia*, agreed to restore to the King of Prussia, Silesia, and nearly all his German dominions on the right bank of the Elbe, with the fortresses on the Oder and in Pomerania. The provinces which, prior to the first partition in 1772, formed part of the kingdom of Poland, and had since been annexed to Prussia, were detached from that monarchy and erected into a separate principality, to be called the GRAND-DUCHY OF WARSAW, and bestowed on the King of Saxony, with the exception of the province of Bialystock, containing two hundred thousand souls, which was ceded to *Russia*, which thus participated, in the hour of misfortune, in a share, small indeed, but still a share, of the spoils of its ally. Dantzic, with a limited portion of territory around it, was declared a free and independent city, under the protection of the Kings of Prussia and Saxony, which was in effect declaring it, what it immediately after became, a frontier town of France. A right to a free military road was granted to the King of Saxony across the Prussian states, to connect his German with his Polish dominions; the navigation of the Vistula was declared free to Prussia, Saxony, and Dantzic; the Dukes of Oldenberg and Meck-

lenberg were reinstated in their dominions, but under the condition that their harbours should all be occupied by French troops, so as to prevent the introduction of English merchandise: the mediation of the Emperor of Russia was accepted with a view to the arrangement of a general peace; the Kings of Naples and Holland, with the Confederation of the Rhine, were recognised by the Emperor of Russia: a new kingdom, to be called the KINGDOM OF WESTPHALIA, was erected in favour of Jerome Bonaparte, the Emperor's brother, composed of the whole provinces ceded by Prussia on the left bank of the Elbe, which was recognised by the Emperor of Russia. Hostilities were to cease between Russia and the Ottoman Porte, and the principalities of Wallachia and Moldavia to be evacuated by the Russian troops, but not occupied by those of the Sultaun till the ratification of a general peace; the Emperor of Russia accepted the mediation of Napoleon for the conclusion of his differences with Turkey; the Emperors of Russia and France mutually guaranteed their respective dominions, and agreed to establish commercial relations with each other on the footing of the most favoured nations.¹

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1807.

Art. 12.

Art. 13.

Art. 19.

Art. 20.

Art. 21.

Art. 22.

Art. 23.

Art. 25.

¹ Mart. viii.

637. Dum.

xix. 58, 64.

76.

Treaty with
Prussia.

Art. 9 and 10.

Art. 12.

Art. 13.

Art. 14.

Art. 15.

By the second treaty, concluded two days after, between France and Prussia, the King of Prussia recognised the Kings of Naples, Holland, Westphalia, and the Confederation of the Rhine, and concluded peace with the sovereigns of those several states, as well as with the Emperor of France. He ceded to the kings or princes who should be designated by the Emperor Napoleon all the dominions which at the commencement of the war he possessed between the Rhine and the Elbe, and engaged to offer no opposition to any arrangement in regard to them which his Imperial Majesty might choose to adopt. The King of Prussia ceded, in addition, to the King of Saxony, the circle of Gotha, in Lower Lusatia: he renounced all right to his acquisitions made in Poland subsequent to 1st January 1772, and to the city and surrounding territory of Dantzic; and consented to their erection into a separate duchy in favour of the King of Saxony, as well as to the military road through his dominions to connect the Polish with the German possessions of that sovereign. He agreed to the extension of

CHAP.
XLVI.

1807.

Art. 18.

Art. 28.

¹ Mart. viii.

66l. Dum.

xix. 64, 71.

the frontiers of Russian Poland, by the cession of the province of Bialystock; consented, till the conclusion of a general maritime peace, to close his harbours without exception to the ships and commerce of Great Britain; and concurred in a separate convention, having for its object the restoration of the strongholds of Prussia at certain fixed periods, and the sums to be paid for their civil and military evacuation.¹

77.
Immense
losses of
Prussia by
this treaty.

The losses of Prussia by this treaty were enormous. Between the states forming part of her possessions ceded to the Grand-duchy of Warsaw, and those acquired by the kingdom of Westphalia, she lost 4,236,048 inhabitants, or nearly half of her dominions, for those retained contained only 5,034,504 souls.* But overwhelming as the losses were, they constituted but a small part of the calamities which fell on the ill-fated monarchy by this disastrous peace. The fortresses left her, whether in Silesia or on the Oder, remained in the hands of France, nominally as a security for payment of the war contributions which were to be levied on the impoverished inhabitants, but really to overawe its government, and paralyse its military resources. A garrison of twenty thousand French soldiers was cantoned in Dantzic — a frontier station of immense importance, both as hermetically closing the mouths of the Vistula, giving the French authorities the entire command of the commerce of Poland, and affording an advanced post which, in the event of future hostilities, would be highly serviceable

* She lost on the east of the
river Elbe:—

	Souls.
Circle of Cotbus, . . .	33,500
Of Western Prussia, . . .	262,286
Southern Prussia, Old Poland, . . .	1,282,189
New Eastern Prussia, . . .	904,518
	2,482,493

On the west of the Elbe:—

	Over,	Souls.
Circle of Old Munich and Prignitz, . . .		2,482,493
Duchy of Magdeburg, . . .		112,000
Halberstadt, . . .		250,039
Hildesheim, . . .		148,230
Ecclesfeld and Erfurth, . . .		130,069
Maiden and Revensberg, . . .		164,690
Paderborn, Munster, Leugen, and Teck- lemberg, . . .		159,776
La Marche, Essen, Elten, and Wreden, . . .		268,542
East Friedland, . . .		162,101
Bayreuth, . . .		119,803
		238,305
		4,236,048

—See BIGNON, vi 335; and HARD. ix. 487.

in a war with Russia. The newly established kingdoms of Westphalia and Saxony, with the military road through Prussia, terminating in the Grand-duchy of Warsaw, gave the French Emperor the undisputed control of Northern Germany; in effect, brought up the French frontier to the Niemen, and enabled him to commence any future war with the same advantage from that distant river as he had done the present from the banks of the Rhine. At the same time enormous contributions, amounting to the stupendous, and, if not proved by authentic documents, incredible sum of *six hundred millions of francs*, or twenty-four millions sterling, were imposed on the countries which had been the seat of war between the Rhine and the Niemen; a sum at least equal to fifty millions sterling in Great Britain, when the difference in the value of money at that time and the wealth of the two states is taken into consideration. This grievous exaction completely paralysed the strength of Prussia, and rendered her for the next five years totally incapable of extricating herself from that iron net in which she was enveloped by the continued occupation of her fortresses by the French troops.^{1*}

¹ Hard. ix.
490, 491.

* This war contribution on the north of Germany was so prodigious a burden, and in its first effects was so instrumental in increasing the power of France, and in its ultimate results in occasioning its overthrow, that the particulars of it are here given, taken from the authentic records of Count Daru, the chief commissioner intrusted by Napoleon with its collection, as one of the most instructive and curious monuments of the Revolutionary wars.

War contributions imposed since the 15th

	Francs.	
October 1806, and levied before the 1st		
Jan. 1808,	474,352,650	or L.19,000,000
Remaining still to recover,	39,391,759	1,600,000
Contributions levied in kind,	90,483,511	3,600,000
	604,227,920	L.24,200,000

—See DARU'S *Report to NAPOLEON*, 1st Jan. 1808; DUM. xix. 462, 465; *Pièces Just.*

In the Prussian estimate, the amount is stated considerably higher—even in so far as it was levied on the Prussian States alone. It stands thus:—

	Francs.	
War Contributions in specie,	220,000,000	or L.8,800,000
Maintenance of the fortresses,	40,000,000	1,600,000
Contributions in kind, without counting the		
billeting of soldiers,	346,800,000	13,870,000
Miscellaneous losses,	8,000,000	320,000
Losses sustained in the local taxes,	75,000,000	3,000,000
Ditto in the general revenue,	50,000,000	2,000,000
	739,800,000	L.29,590,000

—See SCHOELL, vi. 518.

When it is recollected that the whole revenues of Prussia were only about L.6,000,000; that money at that period was at least of twice the value there that it was in England; and that the monarchy was already exhausted by the immense efforts made for the campaign of 1806, either of these estimates

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1807.

78.

Secret treaty
for the parti-
tion of
Turkey.

Important as the changes introduced by these public treaties of Tilsit were to the political interests of Europe, they were far inferior in daring and magnitude to the provisions of the secret conventions concluded at the same place between the French Emperor and the Russian Autocrat. These two mighty potentates, who so lately had been actuated by the strongest hostility against each other, deeming themselves invincible when they had united their arms together, had conceived, beyond all question, the project of dividing the world between them. To Russia was assigned, with hardly any limitations, the empire of the East; France acquired absolute sway in all the kingdoms of the West: both united in cordial hostility against the maritime power of Great Britain. Turkey, in consequence, was abandoned almost without reserve to the Russian Autocrat. To the cession of Constantinople alone, Napoleon never would agree; and rivalry for the possession of that matchless capital, itself worth an empire, was one of the principal causes which afterwards led him into the desperate chances of the Moscow campaign. The clause on this subject was in the following terms:—"In like manner, if in consequence of the changes which have recently taken place in the government of Constantinople, the Porte shall decline the intervention of France; or in case, having accepted it, the negotiations shall not have led to a satisfactory adjustment in the space of three months, France will make common cause with Russia against the Ottoman Porte, and the two high contracting parties will unite their efforts to wrest from the vexatious and oppressive government of the Turks all its provinces in Europe—*Romelia and Constantinople alone excepted.*"¹

Art. 8.
Secret treaty.¹ Bign. vi.
339, 340.
Hard. ix.
430.

The abandonment of all Turkey, with the exception of its capital and the small adjacent province, to the ambition of its hereditary and inveterate enemies, called for a similar concession to the leading objects of French ambi-

must appear amongst the most enormous instances of military exaction on record in history.

In addition to all this, Napoleon and his generals, with disgraceful rapacity, carried off from the different palaces in Prussia no less than 127 paintings, most of them by first-rate masters, and 238 marbles or statues, besides all the manuscripts, curiosities, and antiquities they could lay their hands on. The moveables thus carried away, contrary to the laws of war, were worth above L.300,000. They were all reclaimed and got back by the Prussians on the capture of Paris in 1815.—See *the Official list in* SCHOELL, vi 261, 289.

tion. This was provided for in the articles regarding the prosecution of the war against England, and the cession of the Spanish peninsula to the French Emperor. In regard to the first object, it was stipulated, that in case the proffered mediation of France to adjust the differences with the cabinet of St James's should not be accepted, Russia should make common cause with France against England, with all its forces, by sea and land; or, "if, having accepted it, peace was not concluded by the 1st November, on terms stipulating that the flags of every power should enjoy a perfect and entire equality on every sea, and that all the conquests made of French possessions since 1805 should be restored; in that case also, Russia shall demand a categorical answer by the 1st December, and the Russian ambassador shall receive a conditional order to quit London." In the event of the English government not having made a satisfactory answer to the Russian requisition, "France and Russia shall jointly *summon the three courts of Copenhagen, Stockholm, and Lisbon, to close their harbours against English vessels, recall their ambassadors from London, and declare war against Great Britain.*" Hanover was to be restored to England in exchange for the whole colonies she had conquered during the war; Spain was to be compelled to remain in the alliance against Great Britain; and the Emperor of France engaged to do nothing tending to augment the power of the Grand-duchy of Warsaw, or which might lead to the re-establishment of the Polish monarchy.^{1*}

This was the whole extent to which the formal secret treaty of Tilsit went; but, extensive as the changes which it contemplated were, they yet yielded in magnitude to those which were also agreed on, in a convention still more secret, between the two Emperors. By this, which may literally be called spoliating, agreement, the shares

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XLVI.

1807.

79.

Secret articles
regarding
England and
all neutral
fleets.

Art. 4.

Art. 7.

Art. 5.

¹ Bign. vi.
336. Hard.
ix. 431. Jom.
ii. 434, 435.

80.

Secret agree-
ment between
the Emperors
regarding
Spain and
Italy.

* These secret articles of the treaty of Tilsit, which are of such moment, both as illustrating the general character of Napoleon's policy, and affording an unanswerable vindication of the Copenhagen expedition, have been literally transcribed from Bignon's work. As that author was not only for long the French ambassador at Berlin, but was also nominated by Napoleon in his testament as the author to whom was committed, with a legacy of 100,000 francs, the task of writing a history of his diplomacy, which he has executed with great ability, it is impossible to quote them from a more unexceptionable authority; and he himself says he has given them "textuellement." They are not yet to be found in any diplomatic collection.—BIGN. iii. 642.

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1807.

Art. 1.

Arts. 2. and 3.

Art. 4.

Art. 5.

¹ Bign. v.
347, 348.
Hard. ix.
431, 432.

Decisive evi-
dence of these
projects of
spoliation
which exists
both on the
testimony of
the French and
Russian
Emperors.

which the two imperial robbers were to have respectively in the partition of Europe were chalked out. The mouths of the Cattaro, which had been ostensibly at least the original cause of the rupture, were ceded by Russia to France, as well as the seven Ionian Islands. Joseph Buonaparte was to be secured in the possession of Sicily as well as of Naples ; Ferdinand IV., the reigning King of Sicily, was to receive an indemnity in the Isle of Candia, or some other part of the Turkish empire ; the dominions of the Pope were to be ceded to France, as well as Malta and Egypt ; the *sovereigns of the houses of Bourbon and Braganza, in the Spanish peninsula, were to be replaced by princes of the family of Napoleon* ; and when the final partition of the Ottoman empire took place, Wallachia, Moldavia, Servia, and Bulgaria were to be allotted to Russia ; while Greece, Macedonia, Dalmatia, and all the sea-coasts of the Adriatic, were to be enjoyed by France, which engaged in return to throw no obstacles in the way of the acquisition of Finland by the Russian Emperor.¹*

* As the secret articles of the treaty of Tilsit are given chiefly on the authority of M. Bignon, as a chosen partisan of Napoleon, and therefore a valuable unwilling witness, it is proper to mention that he does not admit the express signature of a convention regarding the dethroning of the Spanish and Portuguese sovereigns, and the partition of the Turkish empire, but says that “these projects were merely sketched out in the private conferences of the two Emperors, but without being actually reduced to writing,”—while the author of Prince Hardenberg’s Memoirs, whose accuracy and extent of secret information are in general equally remarkable, asserts that they were embodied in an express treaty.—See BIGN. vi. 345, and HARD. ix. 433. It is of little importance whether they were or were not embodied in a formal convention, since there was no doubt that they were verbally agreed on between the two Emperors. We have the authority of the Emperor Alexander that Napoleon said to him at Tilsit, “I lay no stress on the evacuation of Wallachia and Moldavia by your troops ; you may protect them if you desire. It is impossible any longer to endure the presence of the Turks in Europe ; you are at liberty to chase them into Asia ; but observe only, I rely upon it that Constantinople is not to fall into the hands of any European power.”—HARD. ix. 432. Napoleon, in conversation with Escoiquiz at Bayonne in the following year, said, “The Emperor Alexander, to whom I revealed at Tilsit my designs against Spain, which were formed at that period, approved of them, and gave me his word of honour he would throw no obstacle in the way.”—ESCOIQ. This coincides with what Savary affirms, who says,—“The Emperor Alexander frequently repeated to me, when I was afterwards ambassador at St Petersburg, that Napoleon had said to him that he was under no engagements with the new Sultaun, and that the changes which had supervened in the world inevitably changed the relations of states to each other. I saw at once that this point had formed the subject of their secret conference at Tilsit ; and I could not avoid the conviction that a mutual communication of their projects had taken place, because I could not believe that we would have abandoned the Turks without receiving some compensation in some other quarter. I have strong reasons for believing that the Spanish question was brought under discussion at Tilsit. The Emperor Napoleon had that affair strongly at heart, and nothing could be more natural than that he should frankly communicate it to the Czar ; the more especially as he had on his side a project of aggrandisement, in the way of which, without previous concert,

Napoleon was not long of taking steps to pave the way for the acquisition of his share of the Ottoman dominions. On the day after the secret treaty with Russia was signed, he despatched a letter to the King of Naples, informing him of the cession of Corfu to France, and directing him to assemble, in the most secret manner, four thousand men at Otranto and Tarentum, to take possession of that island, and of the mouths of the Cattaro.¹ On the same day he enjoined Eugene, Viceroy of Italy, to send a force of six thousand men into Dalmatia;² while Marshal Marmont, who commanded in that province, was directed, instead of attacking the Montenegrins, as he was preparing to do, to do every thing in his power to make these mountaineers receive willingly the French government, beneath which they would soon be placed; and at the same time to transmit minute information as to the resources, population, and revenue of Bosnia, Thrace, Albania, Macedonia, and Greece, and what direction two European armies should follow—entering that country, one by the Cattaro, the other by Corfu.* At the same time Count Guilleminot was

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18.Measures of
Napoleon to
secure his
anticipated
Turkish
acquisitions.¹ Nap. to
Murat,
Tilsit, 8th
July.² Nap. to
Eugene, 8th
July.

France might be disposed to throw obstacles. I was the more confirmed in this opinion by observing the conduct and language of the Emperor Alexander when the Spanish war broke out.”—SAVARY, iii. 98, 99. And Napoleon said at St Helena—“All the Emperor Alexander’s thoughts are directed to the conquest of Turkey. *We have had many discussions about it, and at first I was pleased with his proposals*, because I thought it would benefit the world to drive those brutes the Turks out of Europe. But when I reflected upon the consequences of this step, and saw what a tremendous weight of power it would give to Russia, on account of the number of Greeks in the Turkish dominions who would naturally join the Russians, I refused to consent to it, especially as Alexander wanted to get Constantinople, which I would not allow, as it would have destroyed the equilibrium of power in Europe. I reflected that *France would gain Egypt, Syria, and the islands*, which would have been nothing in comparison with what Russia would have obtained.”—O’MEARA, i. 382. “Was there,” says Bignon, “any express treaty assigning to each Emperor his share of the Turkish dominions? No; that there *was an agreement on that subject between the two Emperors* is beyond a doubt; but no formal treaty.” We shall find numberless proofs of this in the sequel of this work in the language used by the Emperor Alexander, and the actions of Napoleon. They had even gone so far as to assign a portion also to the Emperor Francis,—“Something,” in Alexander’s words, “to Austria, to soothe her vanity rather than satisfy her ambition.”—BIGNON, vi. 343.

* To Marmont Napoleon wrote, on July 8, from Tilsit:—“Set to work as vigorously as possible to obtain, by officers whom you shall send forward with that view, or in any other way, and address directly to the Emperor, in order that he may know by confidential officers, both geographically and civilly, all the information you can acquire regarding Bosnia, Macedonia, Thrace, Albania, &c. What is the amount of their population, what resources in clothing, provisions, or money those provinces would furnish *to any European power which might possess them*; in fine, what revenue could be drawn from them at the moment of their occupation, for the principles of their occupation are at present without any proper settlement? In a second memoir, state, in a

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July 9.

¹ Nap. to
Count Guille-
minot, 9th
July.

² Bign. vi.
334, 345
Dum. xix.
337, 344,
which con-
tains Pièces
Just.

82.
Convention
regarding the
payment of
the French
contribution
on Prussia.

Art. 2 and 3.

despatched from Tilsit on a double mission; the first, open and ostensible, to General Michelson's army on the Danube—the other, secret, to General Sebastiani at Constantinople: in the course of which he was to acquire all the information he could on the subject of the population, riches, and geographical position of the country through which he passed.¹ Finally, to General Sebastiani himself he fully explained the whole design, which was, as stated in his letters, that, as no European power would be permitted to possess Constantinople and the Hellespont, the first thing to be done was “to draw a line from Bourgas, on the Black Sea, to the Gulf of Enos in the Archipelago; and all to the eastward of that line, including Adrianople, was to remain to Turkey; Russia was to obtain *Moldavia, Wallachia, and all Bulgaria*, as far as the left bank of the Hebrus; Servia was to be allotted to Austria; and *Bosnia, Albania, Epirus, Peloponnesus, Attica, and Thessalia*, to France.” Sebastiani at the same time received orders to prepare and transmit without delay to the French Emperor a memorial, containing exact details, to define the geographical boundaries of the acquisitions of the three powers interested in the partition.²

While Napoleon and Alexander were thus adjusting their differences at Tilsit, by the spoliation of all the weaker powers in Europe, partitioning Turkey, and providing for the dethronement of the sovereigns in the Spanish Peninsula, the chains were drawn yet more closely round unhappy Prussia. In the treaty with that power it had been provided that a subsidiary military convention should be concluded regarding the time of the evacuation of the fortresses by the French troops, and the sums of money to be paid for their ransom.

Nominally, it was arranged that they should be evacuated by the 1st October, with the exception of Stettin, which

military point of view, if two European armies should enter these provinces at once, the one by Cattaro and Dalmatia into Bosnia, the other by Corfu, what force would be required for each to ensure success; what species of arms would be most advantageous; how could the artillery be transported; could horses for its transport be found in the country; could recruits be raised there; what would be the most favourable times for military operations? All these reports should be transmitted by confidential persons in whom you have perfect reliance. Keep on good terms with the Pasha of Bosnia: but nevertheless gradually let your relations with him become more cold and reserved than formerly.”—NAPOLEON to MARMONT, *Tilsit, July 8, 1807*; DUM. xix. 341, 342.

was still to be garrisoned by French troops. But as it was expressly declared, as a *sine qua non*, that the whole contributions imposed should be paid up before the evacuation commenced, that the King of Prussia should levy no revenue in his dominions till these exactions were fully satisfied, and that the Prussians, meanwhile, should feed, clothe, and lodge all the French troops within their bounds, the French Emperor had in reality the means of retaining possession of them as long as he chose, which he accordingly did. In addition to the enormous war contributions already mentioned, of which 513,744,900 francs, or £20,500,000, fell on Prussia alone, further and most burdensome commissions were forced on the same unhappy state in the end of the year, in virtue of which Count Daru, the French collector-general, demanded 154,000,000 francs, or £6,160,000 more from its now wasted and wretched provinces—an exaction so monstrous and so utterly disproportioned to its scanty revenue, which did not, after its grievous losses, exceed £3,000,000 sterling, that it never was or could be fully discharged. And this gave the French a pretence for continuing the occupation of the fortresses, and wringing contributions from the country till five years afterwards, when the Moscow campaign commenced.¹

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Art. 4.

Art. 5.

Note, chap.
xlvi. § 77.

Nov. 10, and
Dec. 10.

¹ Daru's
Report.
Dum. xix.
85, and
Hard. ix.
453, 454.

Bereft by this disastrous treaty of half his dominions, nothing remained to the King of Prussia but submission; and he won the hearts of all the really generous in Europe by the resignation and heroism with which he bore so extraordinary a reverse of fortune. In a dignified proclamation, which he addressed to the inhabitants of his lost provinces upon liberating them from their allegiance to the Prussian throne, he observed, "Dear inhabitants of faithful provinces, districts, and towns! My arms have been unfortunate. The efforts of the relics of my forces have been of no avail. Driven to the extreme boundary of my empire, and having seen my powerful ally conclude an armistice and sign a peace, no choice remained to me but to follow his example. That peace imposed on me the most painful sacrifices. The bonds of treaties, the reciprocal ties of love and duty, the fruit of ages of labour, have been broken asunder. All my efforts, and they have been most strenuous, have proved

83.
Noble pro-
clamation by
the King of
Prussia to his
lost pro-
vinces.

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¹ Scott's
Nap. v. 411,
412.84.
Enormous
losses sus-
tained by the
French dur-
ing the
campaign.

in vain. Fate ordains it. A father is compelled to depart from his children. I hereby release you from your allegiance to me and my house. My most ardent prayers for your welfare will always attend you in your relations to your new sovereigns. Be to them what you have ever been to me. Neither force nor fate shall ever sever the remembrance of you from my heart.”¹

Vast as had been the conquests, unbounded the triumphs of France, during the campaign, the consumption of life to the victors had been, if possible, still greater; and it was already apparent that war, conducted on this gigantic scale, was attended with a sacrifice of human beings which, for any lengthened time, would be insupportable. The fearful and ominous call of eighty thousand conscripts, *thrice repeated* during the short period of eight months, had already told the French people at what cost, of their best and their bravest, they followed the car of victory; and the official details which have since come to light, show that even the enormous levy of two hundred and forty thousand men in that short period, was not disproportioned to the expenditure of the campaign. Authentic documents prove that the number of sick and wounded who were received into the French hospitals during the campaign, from the banks of the Saale to those of the Niemen, amounted to the stupendous number of FOUR HUNDRED AND TWENTY THOUSAND; of whom, at an average, not more than a ninth were prisoners taken from the Allies!* If such were the losses to the victors, it

* The following are the details of this enormous catalogue of human suffering:—

In hospital of the army on 1st October 1806,	.	.	.	403
Admitted till 30th June 1807,	.	.	.	421,416

	Total treated in the Hospital,	421,819
Of whom died there,	.	31,916
Dismissed cured,	.	370,473
Sent back to France,	.	11,455
Remained in hospital on 17th October 1808,	.	7,957

The average stay of each patient in the hospital was 29 days.	The propor-
tions of maladies out of 200 was as follows:—	

Fevers,	.	.	.	105
Wounded,	.	.	.	47
Venereal,	.	.	.	31
Various,	.	.	.	17

200

This is a striking proof how much greater the mortality occasioned by fever

may readily be believed that those of the vanquished were still greater; and putting the two together, it may fairly be concluded that, from the 1st October 1806, to the 30th June 1807—that is, during a period of nine months—a million of human beings were consigned to military hospitals, of whom at least a hundred thousand perished, independent of those slain in battle, who were nearly as many more! The mind finds it impossible to apprehend such enormous calamities; like the calculated distances of the sun or the fixed stars, they elude the grasp of the most vivid imagination; but even in the bewildering impression which they produce, they tend to show how boundless was the suffering then occasioned by human ambition; how awful the judgment of the Almighty then executed upon the earth!¹

¹ Daru's Report to Napoleon, in Dum. xix. 486. Pieces Just.

Nor is it difficult to discern what were the national sins which were thus visited with so terrible a punishment. Fourteen years before, Austria, Russia, and Prussia had united their armies to partition Sarmatia, and Suwarroff had entered Warsaw while yet reeking with Polish blood. In the prosecution of this guilty object, they neglected the volcano which was bursting forth in the west of Europe; they starved the war on the Rhine to feed that on the Vistula, and opened the gates of Germany to French ambition, in order to master the bulwarks of Sarmatia for themselves. Prussia, in particular, first drew off from the European

85.
Memorable retribution for the partition of Poland on the partitioning powers.

and the other diseases incident to a campaign is, than the actual number killed or wounded in the field. Applying these proportions to the total number of 420,000, we shall have the whole numbers nearly as follows:—

Fevers,	.	.	.	.	210,000
Wounded,	.	.	.	.	100,000
Venereal,	.	.	.	.	62,000
Miscellaneous,	.	.	.	.	48,000

420,000

The immense number of wounded being at least *five times* what the bulletins admitted, demonstrates, if an additional proof were wanting, the total falsehood in the estimate of losses by which these reports were invariably distinguished. The great number of venereal patients is very curious, and highly characteristic of the French soldiers.—DARU'S *Report to NAPOLEON*; DUM. xix. 486, 487.

It appears from Savary's report of the number of sick and wounded in the great hospital at Königsberg, of which city he received the command after the battle of Friedland, that at the end of June 1807 they amounted to the immense number of 27,376. Preparations were made for the reception of 57,000; but the sudden conclusion of the peace at Tilsit rendered them in a great degree unnecessary. Nevertheless, the whole hospitals of the army were again overflowing in spring 1808, in every part of the north of Germany.—SAVARY, iii. 66, 69.

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1807.

alliance ; and after the great barrier of frontier fortresses had been broken through in 1793, and revolutionary France stood, as Napoleon admits, "on the verge of ruin," allowed her to restore her tottering fortunes, and for ten long years stood by in dubious and selfish neutrality, anxious only to secure or increase her ill-gotten gains. And what was the result ? Poland became the great theatre of punishment to the partitioning powers ; her blood-stained fields beheld the writhing and the anguish of the victors. Pierced to the heart by hostile armies, driven up to a corner of her territory, within sight almost of the Sarmatian wilds, Austria saw her expiring efforts for independence overthrown on the field of Austerlitz. Reft of her dominions, bound in chains for the insult of the Conqueror, with the iron driven into her soul, Prussia beheld her last hopes expire on the shores of the Vistula.

86.
And of
Russia.

Banished almost from Europe, conquered in war, sullied in fame, Russia was compelled to sue for peace on the banks of the Niemen, the frontier of her Lithuanian spoils. The measure of her retribution was not yet complete ; the Grand-duchy of Warsaw was to become the outwork of France against Muscovy ; the tide of war was to roll on to Red Russia ; the sacred towers of Smolensko were to be shaken by Polish battalions ; the sack of Praga was to be expiated by the flames of Moscow. That Providence superintends the progress of human affairs ; that the retributions of justice apply to political societies as well as to single men ; and that nations, which have no immortality, are destined to undergo the punishment of their flagrant iniquities in this world, was long ago announced in thunders from Mount Sinai, and may be read on every subsequent page of civilised history. But it is often on the third and fourth generation that the retribution descends ; and in the complicated thread of intervening events, it is sometimes difficult to trace the connexion which we know exists between the guilty deeds and the deserved suffering. In the present instance, however, the connexion was immediate and palpable ; the actors in the iniquitous spoliation were themselves the sufferers by its effects : it was the partition of Poland which opened the gates of Europe to France ;

it was the partitioning powers that sank beneath the car of Napoleon's ambition.

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And was France, then, the instrument of these terrible dispensations, herself to escape the punishment of her sins? Was she, stained with the blood of the righteous, wrapt in the flames of the church, marked with the sign of the miscreant, to be the besom of destruction to others, and to bask only in the sunshine of glory herself?—No! the dread hour of her retribution was steadily approaching; swift as was the march of her triumphant host, swifter still was the advance of the calamities which were to presage her fall. Already to the discerning eye was visible the handwriting on the wall which foretold her doom. At Tilsit she reached the highest point of her ascendant; every subsequent change was a step nearer to her ruin. True, the Continent had sunk beneath her arms; true, Austria, Prussia, and Russia had successively fallen in the conflict; true, she had advanced her eagles to the Niemen, and from the rock of Gibraltar to the Baltic Sea, no voice dared to breathe a whisper against her authority; still the seeds of destruction were implanted in her bosom. Her feet were of base and perishable clay. The resources of the empire were wasting away in the pursuit of the lurid phantoms which its people worshipped; its strength was melting under the incessant drains which the career of victory demanded; a hundred and fifty thousand men were annually sacrificed to the Moloch of its ambition. They saw it not—they felt it not: joyfully its youth “descend to the harvest of death.” “They REPENTED

87.
Terrible re-
tribution that
was ap-
proaching to
France.

NOT of their sins, to give glory to the Lord.”¹ But^{9.} the effect was not the less certain, that the operation of the circumstances producing it was not perceived; and among the many concurring causes which at this period were preparing the fall of the French Empire, a prominent place must be assigned to that very treaty of Tilsit which apparently carried its fortunes to their highest elevation.

In this treaty were to be discerned no marks of great political capacity on the part of the Conqueror; in the harshness and perfidy with which it was accompanied, the foundation was laid for the most powerful future allies to the vanquished. The formation of the kingdom of Westphalia, and the Grand-duchy of War-

¹ Rev. xvi. 8,

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1807.

88.

Evil consequences of the treaty of Tilsit in the end to Napoleon.

saw, with three or four millions of souls, each connected only by a military road across the impoverished and indignant remaining dominions of Frederick William, could not be supposed to add, in any considerable degree, to the strength of the French Empire. The indignities offered to Prussia, the slights shown to her beautiful and high-spirited Queen, the enormous contributions imposed on her inhabitants, the relentless rigour with which they were levied, the forcible retention of her fortresses, the tearing away of half her dominions, were injuries that could never be forgiven. Her people, in consequence, imbibed the most unbounded horror at French oppression; and though the fire did not burst forth for some years in open conflagration, it smouldered incessantly in all ranks, from the throne to the cottage, till at length its force became irresistible.

89.

Useless allies which Napoleon made to himself by this treaty.

And what allies did Napoleon rear up on the Vistula by the arrangements of Tilsit, to prove a counterpoise to the deadly hostility of Prussia thus gathering strength in his rear? None equal to the enemies whom he created. Saxony, indeed, was made a faithful friend, and proved herself such in the hour of disaster, as well as the day of triumph. But the hopes of the Poles were cruelly blighted, and that confidence in the restoration of their empire by his assistance, which might have rendered their warlike bands so powerful an ally on the shores of the Vistula, for ever destroyed.* Instead of seeing their nationality revive, the ancient line of their princes restored, and their lost provinces again reunited under one sceptre, they beheld only a fragment of their former empire wrested from Prussia, and handed over, too weak to defend itself, to the foreign government of the house of Saxony. The close alliance with Russia, and still more, the extraordinary intimacy which had sprung up between the two Emperors, precluded all hope that the vast provinces of Lithuania would ever again be restored to the domination

* "The treaty of Tilsit," says Oginski, "spread consternation through all the Polish provinces. Numbers in Lithuania and Wolhynia had left their homes to join the army raised under the auspices of Napoleon, and knew that their safety was compromised. Those who waited only for his passage of the Niemen to declare themselves, were disappointed. Universally, the treaty was regarded as the tomb of all the hopes which had been entertained of the restoration of the ancient monarchy; and from that moment, the confidence of all the Poles in the good intentions of the Emperor Napoleon was irrevocably weakened."—OGINSKI, *Mem. sur la Pologne*, ii. 345.

of the Jagellons or the Sobieskis. The restoration of Poland thus seemed further removed than ever, in consequence of the successful efforts which a portion of its inhabitants had made for their liberation ; they appeared to have now as much to fear from the triumphs of the French as of the Russian arms. Thus, the treaty of Tilsit irrevocably alienated Prussia, and at the same time extinguished the rising ardour of Poland ; and while it broke down the strength of all the intervening states, and presaged a future desperate strife between the despots of the East and West on the banks of the Niemen, laid no foundation in the affections of mankind for the moral support by which its dangers were to be encountered.

But if the treaty of Tilsit involved serious errors in policy, so far as Poland and Prussia were concerned, much more was it worthy of reprehension when the provisions for the immediate partition of Turkey are taken into consideration. Six months had not elapsed since he had written to Marmont "to spare no protestations or assistance to Turkey, since she was the faithful ally of the French empire." Seven months had not elapsed since he had publicly declared at Posen, "that the full and complete independence of the Ottoman empire will ever be the object most at heart with the Emperor, as it is indispensable to the security of France and Italy : He would esteem the successes of the present war of little value, if they did not give him the means of reinstating the Sublime Porte in complete independence :"¹ *one month* had not elapsed since he had said to the Turkish ambassador, in a public audience at Finkenstein, "that *his right hand was not more inseparable from his left* than the Sultaun Selim should ever be to him."² In consequence of these protestations, Turkey had thrown itself into the breach ; she had braved the whole hostility of Russia, and defied the thunders of England when her fleets were anchored off the Seraglio Point. And what return did Napoleon make to these faithful allies for the exemplary fidelity with which they had stood by his fortunes when they were shaking in every quarter, and Europe, after the battle of Eylau, was ready to start up in fearful hostility in his rear ?

90.
Disgraceful
perfidy of
Napoleon
towards the
Turks.
Jan. 2.

¹ Ante,
c. xlv. § 14.
On 28th
May.

² Ante,
c. xlv. § 10.

The return he made was to sign a convention with

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91.

Whom he
surrenders to
the spoliation
of Russia.

Alexander for the partition of all their European dominions ; and, not content with assuring the Czar that he was at perfect liberty to chase the Ottomans into Asia, provided only he did not lay violent hands on Constantinople, he stipulated for the largest share of the spoils, including *Thrace, Albania, Dalmatia, Epirus, and Greece, for himself* ; while the consent of Austria was to be purchased by the acquisition of Servia ! A more iniquitous and shameless instance of treachery is not to be found even in the dark annals of Italian perfidy : and it is sufficient to demonstrate, what so many other circumstances conspire to indicate, that this great man was as regardless of the sanctity of treaties as he was of the duty of veracity ; that vows were made by him only to be broken, and oaths intended to be kept only till it was expedient to violate them ; and that in prosperous, equally as adverse fortune, no reliance could be placed upon his feelings of gratitude or sense of obligation, if a present interest was to be served by forgetting them.

92.

No defence
can be made
for it in consequence of
the revolution at Constantinople.

The excuse set up for this monstrous tergiversation by the French writers, viz. that a few weeks before the battle of Friedland an insurrection of the Janizzaries had taken place at Constantinople, and the ruling powers there had been overturned by open violence, is totally insufficient. The deposition of one sultaun—no unusual occurrence in Oriental dynasties—had made no change whatever in the amicable disposition of the Divan towards France, or their inveterate hostility to the ancient and hereditary rivals of the Mahommedan faith : on the contrary, the party of the Janizzaries which had now gained the ascendant, was precisely the one which had ever been inclined to prosecute hostilities with Russia with the most fanatical fervour. It ill became France to hold out a revolution in the Seraglio as a ground for considering all the existing obligations with Turkey as annulled, when her own changes of government since the Revolution had been so frequent, that Talleyrand had already sworn allegiance to *ten* in succession. And, in truth, this violation of public faith was as short-sighted as it was dishonourable ; the secret articles soon came to the knowledge of the British government—they were communicated by their ambassador to the Divan, and

produced an impression which was never forgotten. Honest and sincere, without foresight equally as deceit, the Turks are as incapable of betraying an ally as they are of forgetting an act of treachery committed against themselves. The time will come in this history, when the moment of retribution arrives, when Napoleon, hard pressed by the storms of winter and the arms of Russia, is to feel the bitterness of an ally's desertion, and when the perfidy of Tilsit is to be awfully avenged on the shores of the Berezina.*

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Towards the other powers of Europe the conduct of the two imperial despots was alike at variance with every principle of fidelity to their allies, or moderation towards their weaker neighbours. France abandoned Finland to Russia, and Alexander felt no scruples at accepting the project of rounding his territories in the neighbourhood of St Petersburg by wresting that important province from his faithful ally the King of Sweden, and even went the length of advancing his western frontier, by sharing in the spoils of his unhappy brother the King of Prussia; while Russia surrendered Italy to France, and engaged to wink at the appropriation of the Papal States by

93.

Mutual projects of the Emperors for the spoliation of the other European powers.

* The perfidious conduct of Napoleon towards Turkey has been almost overlooked by the liberal writers of Europe, in the vehemence of their indignation at him for not re-establishing the kingdom of Poland. Without doubt, if that great act of injustice could have been repaired by his victorious arm, and a compact, powerful empire of sixteen millions of souls re-established on the banks of the Vistula, it would have been alike grateful to every lover of freedom, and important as forming a barrier against Muscovite aggrandisement in Europe. But was it possible to construct such an empire, to form such a barrier, out of the disjointed elements of Polish anarchy? That is the point for consideration; and if it was not, then the French Emperor would have thrown away all the advantages of victory, if for a visionary and impracticable scheme of this description he had incurred the lasting and indelible animosity of the partitioning powers. With the aid of two hundred thousand brave men, indeed, which Poland could with ease send into the field, he might, for a season, have withstood the united armies of Russia, Austria, and Prussia; but could he rely on their tumultuary assemblies sustaining the steady and durable efforts requisite for permanent success? What made Poland originally fall a victim to the coalesced powers, once little more than provinces of its mighty dominion? "The insane ambition," as John Sobieski said, "of a plebeian noblesse;" the jealousy of a hundred thousand electors incapable alike of governing themselves or of permitting the steady national government of others. Was this fatal element of discord eradicated from the Polish heart? Is it yet eradicated? Was it possible, by re-establishing Poland in 1807, to have done any thing but, as Talleyrand well expressed it, "organised anarchy?" These are the considerations which then presented, and still present, an invincible obstacle to a measure in other points of view recommended by so many considerations of justice and expedience. It is evident that the passions of the people, their insane desire for democratic equality, were so powerful, that, if re-established in its full original extent, Poland would speedily have again fallen under the dominion of its former conquerors; the same causes which formerly proved fatal to its independence would, without doubt, again have had the same effect.

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1807.

Napoleon, who had resolved upon seizing them, in return for the condescension of the Head of the Church in recently travelling to Paris to place the imperial crown on his head. The rulers of the Continent drew an imaginary line across Europe, and mutually gave each other *carte blanche* in regard to spoliations, how unjustifiable soever, committed on their own side of the division. Napoleon surrendered half the European territories of Turkey to Alexander, and appropriated the other half to himself; while Alexander engaged to throw no obstacles in the way of the dethronement of the sovereigns of the Spanish peninsula, to make way for the elevation of princes of the Buonaparte family. Both appear to have conceived that, in thus suddenly closing their deadly strife and turning their irresistible arms against the secondary states in their vicinity, they would gain important present objects, and mutually find room for the exercise of their future ambition, without encroaching on each other: forgetting that the desires of the human heart are insatiable; that, the more powerful empires become, the more ardently do they pant after universal dominion; and that the same causes which arrayed Rome against Carthage in ancient, and brought Tamerlane and Bajazet into fierce collision in modern times, could not fail to become more powerful in their operation from the mutual aggrandisement which their gigantic empires received. "Nec mundus," said Alexander the Great, "duobus solibus regi potest, nec duo summa regna salvo statu terrarum, potest habere."¹

¹ Quint.
Curtius, l. iv.
c. 11.

The great and ruling principle which actuated Napoleon in the negotiations at Tilsit, was the desire to combine all Europe into a cordial union against Britain.* For this end he was willing to forego, or postpone, his rivalry with

* "It cannot admit of a doubt," says Bignon, "that in the treaty of Tilsit, as in all the actions of his life, it was the desire to force England to conclude peace: that was the sole, the only principle of Napoleon's actions. A prolonged state of war with Russia, or even the conclusion of a treaty which would only have put a period to the bloodshed, would not have satisfied him. It was necessary, not merely that he should have an enemy the less; he required an ally the more. Russia, it is true, had ceased to combat his army, but he required that she should enlist herself on his side; that she should enter into the strife with England, if not with arms, at least with joining in the continental blockade, which was to aim a deadly thrust at her power. All his lures held out to Alexander were calculated for that end; it is as referring to that object that all the minor arrangements to which he consented are to be regarded."—BIGNON, vi. 351, 352.

Russia ; to permit her to emerge, apparently crowned with the laurels of victory, from defeat ; and derive greater advantages from the rout of Friedland than she had reaped even from the triumph of Pultowa or the sack of Ismael. All these sources of aggrandisement to his great continental rival were to Napoleon as nothing, provided only they led to the overthrow of the maritime power of England. That accomplished, he anticipated little comparative difficulty even with the colossal strength of the Scythian monarch. In yielding to his seductions, Alexander appears to have been impressed with a belief that he was the man of destiny, and that, in continuing the combat, he was striving against fate.*

Nor had England any great cause of complaint against him for violating his engagements to her, whatever Sweden or Turkey might have for the ambitious projects entertained at their expense. The cabinet of St James's had themselves receded from the spirit as well as the letter of the confederacy ; the subsidies promised by Mr Pitt had disappeared ; the cabinet of St Petersburg had been drawn into the contest for the interest of Germany and England, and both had withdrawn or been overthrown, leaving Russia alone to maintain it. So circumstanced, Great Britain had no reason to be surprised if Alexander took the first opportunity to extricate himself from a struggle in which the parties chiefly interested no longer appeared to take any share ; nor could she complain if she was left alone to continue a contest which she seemed desirous of reducing to a mere maritime quarrel. Deeply did England and Austria subsequently suffer from this infatuated and ill-timed desertion of the confederacy, at the very moment when the scales hung nearly even, and their aid might have been thrown in with decisive effect upon the balance. They might have stood in firm and impregnable array beside the veterans of Russia on the Vistula or the Elbe ; they were left to maintain singly the contest on the

CHAP.
XLVI.

1807.

94.

Napoleon's
leading object
in the treaty
was the hum-
bling of Great
Britain.

95.

England
could not
complain of
its conditions.

* "Sire," said one of the Russian counsellors to Alexander at Tilsit, "I take the liberty of reminding you of the fate of your father, as the consequence of French alliance." "O, my God!" replied the Emperor, "I know it; I see it; but how can I withstand the destiny which directs me?"—SAVARY, iii. 92.

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XLVI.

1807.

96.
It was ultimately fortunate for Europe that the war was prolonged.

Danube and the Tagus. They might have shared in the glories of Pultusk and Eylau, and converted the rout of Friedland into the triumph of Leipsic ; and they expiated their neglect in the carnage of Wagram and the blood of Talavera.

But though the timidity of Austria, when her forces were capable of interfering with decisive effect on the theatre of European contest, and the supineness of England, when she had only to appear in adequate force to conquer, were the causes to which alone we are to ascribe the long subsequent continuance, multiplied disasters, and unbounded ultimate bloodshed of the war ; yet for the development of the great moral lesson to France and mankind, and the illustration of the glories of patriotic resistance, it was fortunate that, by protracting it, opportunity was afforded for the memorable occurrences of its later years. But for that circumstance, the annals of the world would have lost the strife in the Tyrol, the patriotism of Aspern, the siege of Saragossa, the fields of Spain. Peace would have been concluded with France as an ordinary power ; she would have retained the Rhine for her boundary, and Paris would have remained the depository of revolutionary plunder ; the Moscow campaign would not have avenged the blood of the innocent, nor the capture of their capital entered like iron into the soul of the vanquished. The last act of the mighty drama had not yet arrived ; it was the design of Providence that it should terminate in yet deeper tragedy, and present a more awful spectacle of the Divine judgments to mankind. England would have saved three hundred millions of her debt, but she would have lost Vittoria and Waterloo ; her standards would not have waved in the Pass of Roncesvalles, nor her soldiers entered in triumph the gates of Paris ; she would have shared with Russia, in a very unequal proportion, the lustre of the contest ; and to barbaric force, not freeborn bravery, future ages would have awarded the glory of having struck down the Conqueror of the World.

CHAPTER XLVII.

GENERAL SKETCH OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE IN INDIA.

VAST and interesting as are the events which have now been traced, springing out of the wars of the French Revolution, they are yet outdone by the spectacle which, at the same period, the Oriental World exhibited. The BRITISH EMPIRE IN INDIA forms, beyond all question, the most dazzling object in that age of wonders—perhaps the most extraordinary phenomenon in the history of the species. Antiquity may be searched in vain for a parallel to its lustre. During the plenitude of its power, the Roman empire never contained above a hundred and twenty millions of inhabitants, and they were congregated round the shores of the Mediterranean, with a great inland sea to form their interior line of communication, and an army of four hundred thousand men to secure the submission of its multifarious inhabitants. Magnificent causeways, emanating from Rome, the centre of authority, reached the furthest extremities of its dominions; the legions not only conquered but humanised mankind; and the proconsuls, whether they journeyed from the Forum to the wall of Antoninus and the solitudes of Caledonia, or the shores of the Euphrates and the sands of Parthia, the cataracts of the Nile, the banks of the Danube, or the mountains of Atlas, rolled along the great roads with which these indomitable pioneers of civilisation had penetrated the wilds of nature. Their immense dominions were the result of three centuries of conquest; and the genius of Scipio, Cæsar,

CHAP.
XLVII.

1756.

1.

Comparison
of the Roman
Empire and
British India.

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XLVII.
1756.

2.
Wonderful
circum-
stances
attending
the British
dominion
in India.

and Severus, not less than the civic virtues of Regulus, Cato, and Cicero, were required to extend and cement the mighty fabric.

But in the Eastern world, an empire hardly less extensive or populous, embracing as great a variety of people, and rich in as many millions and provinces, has been conquered by the British arms in less than eighty years, at the distance of above fourteen thousand miles from the ruling state. That vast region, the fabled scene of opulence and grandeur since the dawn of civilisation, from which the arms of Alexander rolled back, which the ferocity of Timour imperfectly vanquished, and the banners of Nadir Shah traversed only to destroy, has been permanently subdued and moulded into a regular province by a company of British merchants, originally settled as obscure traffickers on the shores of Hindostan; who have been dragged to their present perilous height of power by incessant attempts at their destruction on the part of the native princes; whose rise was contemporaneous with numerous and desperate struggles of the British nation with its European rivals, and who never had a fourth part of the disposable national strength at their command. For such a body, in such times, and with such forces, to have acquired so immense a dominion, is one of those prodigies of civilisation with which the history of the last half century so abounds; with which we are too familiar to be able fully to appreciate the wonder; and which must be viewed by mankind, simplified by distance, and gilded by the colours of history, before its due proportions can be understood.

3.
Its extent,
population,
revenue, and
military
strength.

The British empire in India—extending now, with few interruptions, and those only of tributary or allied states, from Cape Comorin to the Himalaya mountains—comprehends by far the richest and most important part of Southern Asia; is in extent nearly four times the area of France,* and six times that of Great Britain and Ireland; contains nearly a hundred millions of inhabitants within its own limits, and forty more in the

* The Company's territories consist of 512,873 square miles: including the protected states, it embraces 1,128,800 square miles. — *Parl. Return*, 1831; and MARTIN, ix. 2, *duodecimo edition*. Europe contains, to the westward of the Ural mountains, 3,500,000 square miles.—See MALTE BRUN, i. 4. France, 156,000 square miles.—*Ibid.* viii. 273.

tributary and protected states,* and yields a revenue of about twenty millions sterling.† The land forces rose in the year 1826, when two bloody wars were to be maintained at the same time, to the enormous amount of 260,000 native troops, including 45,000 cavalry and 1000 pieces of artillery, besides 31,000 native English; and even under the reduced peace establishment of the present time, they still amount to 194,000, of whom 35,000 are British soldiers. This immense force, all in the very highest state of discipline and equipment, is raised entirely by voluntary enrolment, without a compulsory conscription ever being resorted to; and so popular is the British service, and so unbounded the general confidence both in the Company's stability and its fidelity to its engagements, that the only difficulty the authorities experience, is to select the most deserving from the numerous competitors who are desirous of being enrolled under its banners. If public danger threatened, or the Russian eagles approached the Indus, this force might be instantly raised by the same means to a million of armed men.¹

When the British power was threatened with a double attack, and the Rajah of Bhurtpore raised the standard of revolt at the time that the bulk of their forces were

* Population and superficies of India :—

	Square Miles.	Population.
Bengal, Lower Provinces, . . .	153,802	37,500,000
— Upper Provinces, . . .	66,510	32,200,000
— Cessions from Berar, . . .	85,700	3,200,000
Total Bengal, . . .	306,012	72,900,000
Madras, . . .	141,923	13,500,000
Bombay, . . .	64,938	6,800,000
Total British Possessions, . . .	512,873	93,200,000
Allied States, . . .	614,610	43,022,700
Runjeet Sing, . . .	60,000	3,500,000
Sind, . . .	100,000	1,000,000
	1,287,483	140,722,700

—See *Commons' Report on Indian Affairs*, October 11, 1821; and *ELPHINSTONE'S History of India*, i. 5.

† The revenue in 1833 was £18,677,952; that for fifteen years ending 1829, £309,151,920, or about £20,650,000 per annum. The charges in India are £17,583,132, leaving at present a surplus of £1,094,820. The public debt has stood since 1792 as follows :—

1792,	£9,142,720
1809,	30,812,441
1814,	30,919,620
1829,	47,255,374
1833,	44,800,000

—See *Parl. Papers*, May 1833; and *MARTIN*, ix. 113.

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1836.

4.
Dreadful
dangers it
has sur-
mounted.

entangled in the jungles of the Irrawaddy, or dying under the fevers of Arracan, no vacillation or weakness appeared in the British councils. With the right hand they humbled what the Orientals styled the giant strength of Ava, while with the left they crushed the rising power of the northern rajahs; and while a larger force than combated in Portugal under Wellington was pursuing the career of conquest in the Burmese empire, and advancing the British standard almost to the minarets of Ummerapoora, a greater host than the native British who conquered at Waterloo assembled as if by enchantment around the walls of Bhurtpore, and, at the distance of fourteen hundred miles from Calcutta, and sixteen thousand from the British isles, carried the last and hitherto impregnable stronghold of Hindoo independence.* In recent times the strength of the empire has been still more severely tried—it carried its standards at once into Affghanistan and China; withstood a disaster almost unparalleled since the loss of Varus's legions; and in one day received intelligence of the capture of Cabul in the centre of Asia, and the dictating of peace to the Celestial Empire under the walls of Nankin. The greatness of Napoleon flits as a brilliant vision across our recollection; the power of Russia stands forth a present object of terror to our senses; but Russia never invaded Persia or Turkey, albeit adjoining her own frontiers, with forces equal to those which England has arrayed in the plains of Hindostan:† and the host which followed Napoleon to Austerlitz and Friedland, was inferior to that with which Lord Hastings made war on the Mahratta states.‡

* Lord Combermere besieged Bhurtpore, in 1825, with 36,000 red-coats and 180 pieces of cannon; the force employed in the Burmese empire, at the same time, was in all 55,000 strong.—MARTIN, viii. 36; and *Ann. Reg.* 1825. The British and King's German Legion at Waterloo were 29,715 infantry, 8219 cavalry, 6054 artillery; the Hanoverians and Brunswickers about 15,000; the Belgians, 12,000.—See *Adjutant-General's Report*, 6th Nov. 1816; *Battle of Waterloo by a near Observer*, ii. 138.

† In the war of 1828, and which terminated in the crossing of the Balkan, and capture of Adrianople, the Russians could never collect 40,000 men in a single field. In the Persian war of 1824-5, they never had 10,000 men together in one army to the south of the Caucasus. In 1792 and 1800, the English besieged Seringapatam with 35,000 men and 104 pieces of cannon; in 1814, Lord Hastings sent 30,000 men against the Goorkhas on the first range of the Himalaya mountains.—MARTIN, viii. 33, 51.

‡ In 1817, Marquis Hastings made war against the Mahratta confederacy with 81,000 regular infantry, and 33,000 cavalry, in all the armies under his orders—the greatest body of men, if their composition and qualities are con-

Imagination itself can scarcely do justice to the varied and magnificent scenery of Hindostan. From the snowy summits of the Himalaya to the green slopes of Cape Comorin, from the steep Ghauts of Malabar to the sandy shores of Coromandel, it exhibits a succession of the most noble or beautiful features; at times stupendous mountain ranges, their sides clothed with lofty forests, their peaks reposing in icy stillness; at others, vast plains rivalling the Delta of Egypt in richness, and, like it, submerged yearly by the fertilising waters of the Ganges; here lofty ghauts running parallel, at a short distance from the shores of the ocean, to the edge of its waters, and marking the line of demarcation between the low rich or sandy plains on the sea-side, and the elevated table-land, several thousand feet above the sea level in the interior; there, rugged hills or thick forests teeming with the rich productions of a southern sun. The natural boundaries of India are the Himalaya range and mountains of Cabul and Candahar on the north; the splendid and rapid stream of the Indus, seventeen hundred miles in length, of which seven hundred and sixty are navigable, flowing impetuously from their perennial snows, on the northwest; the deep and stagnant Irrawaddy, fourteen hundred miles in length, fed by the eastern extremity of the chain, and winding its way to the Bay of Bengal through the rank luxuriance of tropical vegetation, on the northeast; and the encircling ocean on the coasts of Malabar and Coromandel, on the south. Nature every where appears in this highly favoured region in her most imposing array: the Himalaya mountains, surmounting even Chimborazo in elevation; the Indus, rivalling the River of the Amazons in magnitude; the plain of Bengal, surpassing Mesopotamia itself in fertility—form some of the features of a country which from the earliest times has been the seat of civilisation, and the fabled abode of opulence and magnificence.¹

All the productions of the globe are to be found, and for the most part flourish to perfection, in the varied

sidered, ever assembled under one commander on the plains of Hindostan. The French who fought at Austerlitz were 90,000 of all arms—at Friedland 80,000.—*Ante*, Chap. xl. § 120; and Chap. xlv. § 55; and MARTIN, viii. 35.

¹ Malte Brun, iii. 5, 11. Martin, viii. 91, 92.

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1836.

6.

Its vegetable
and animal
productions.

climates and soils of this splendid peninsula. The forests, the fruits, the crops of Europe, are recognised by the delighted traveller in the Himalaya mountains, where the prodigy is exhibited of valleys tolerably peopled, and bearing crops, at the height of sixteen or seventeen thousand feet above the sea, or considerably above the summit of Mont Blanc, or the Great Glochner. On the side of these stupendous mountain ranges, nature appears on an extraordinary scale of magnificence: huge pinnacles of bare rock shoot up into the azure firmament, and forests overspread their sides, in which scarlet rhododendrons sixty feet in height are surmounted by trees two hundred feet in elevation. The peach, the apricot, the nectarine, even apples, pears, and strawberries, refresh the European, to whom they recall, in a distant land and amidst Oriental luxuries, the images and enjoyments of his youth. Wheat, barley, and oats, with noble forests of teak and oak, flourish on the cool slopes of the mountains; while at their feet the vast plain of Bengal is covered to an incalculable extent with double crops, yearly, of rice, or with thickets of bamboo canes, fed by the fertilising floods which, often to the breadth of a hundred miles, exhibit a sea of water interspersed only with tufts of wood, solitary palms, hamlets, and pagodas. Indigo grows in luxuriance in many districts, and forms a staple article of commerce to the country; sugar thrives as well as in the West Indies, and promises to fill up the gap in the production of the globe occasioned by the disastrous emancipation of the slaves in the western tropical regions; grapes, melons, pine-apples, figs, dates, mangoes, are every where found in profusion, with many other fruits still more luscious, peculiar to the eastern hemisphere. The elephant, at once the strongest, the most sagacious, and the most docile of animals; the camel, the ship of the desert; the horse, the companion and fellow-soldier of man—alike flourish in a country where the tiger and the rhinoceros rule the wilds of nature. Even the flowers and birds partake of the splendid character of creation: the roses of Cachmere and Delhi yield their highly prized perfume to the world; the red blossoms of the ixora and mussonda and innumerable other tropical plants,¹ diffuse a blaze of beauty

¹ Hamilton's
Account of
Hindustan, i.
24, 72. Malte
Brun, iii. 32,
33. Martin,
viii. 153, 157.

through the woods ; the scarlet plumage of the flamingo, the varied hues of the parrot, rival the colours of the setting sun. But the woods are silent, or resound only with the harsh scream of birds, or the fearful cry of beasts of prey ; no troops of feathered songsters fill the air with their melodious voices, nor welcome in the breath of spring with the voice of gladness and the notes of love.

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1836.

In the transactions of Europe, the historian has too good reason frequently to lament the indecision and want of foresight with which both diplomatic negotiations and military operations have been conducted by the English cabinet ; and he is, perhaps, driven to the conclusion that greatness has rather been forced on the state by the energy and virtues of its inhabitants, than conferred upon the people by the wisdom or ability of the government. But in the East, the reverse has from the outset been the case. If the intelligence, vigour, and bravery of the middle and working classes of England, who sent forth their sons to push their fortunes in the plains of Hindostan, have furnished an inexhaustible supply of talent and resolution to conduct their enterprises, the foresight and capacity of the Indian government have almost invariably brought these qualities to bear upon the public service in the most efficient manner. Perhaps there is not to be found in the history of any country, so remarkable a succession of able statesmen and warriors as in India have reared the mighty fabric of British greatness. The cool daring, invincible intrepidity, and military genius of LORD CLIVE laid the foundation of the structure ; the quick sagacity, prompt determination, and high moral courage of WARREN HASTINGS rescued it more than once from ruin : but it was the enlarged views, statesman-like wisdom, and energetic conduct of MARQUIS WELLESLEY which completed the superstructure, and left to succeeding governors a force which nothing could resist, a moral ascendancy which nothing could counterbalance. MARQUIS HASTINGS has since, with equal ability, followed out the same enlightened principles ; crushed the united confederacy of the Mahrattas and Pindarees, vanquished the hill strength of the Goorkhas, and left to his successors a matchless empire, stretching from the Himalaya snows to Cape Comorin, and from the frontiers of China

7.
Extraordi-
nary diplo-
matic ability
with which
India has
been
governed.

CHAP.
XLVII.

1836.

8.
Immense ad-
vantages of
the British
government
to the Indian
people.

to the banks of the Indus, united under one rule, obeying one government, and actuated by one common sense of experienced obligation.

Mr Burke has said that if the English were to be expelled from India, they would leave no better traces of their dominion than the hyena or the tiger. Even at the period when this celebrated expression was used, it savoured more of the fire of the orator than the judgment of the statesman; but had that great man survived to these times, he would have gratefully retracted the sarcasm, and admitted that, of all the marvels attending the British sway in the East, the most wonderful is the extraordinary blessings which it has conferred upon the inhabitants. Facts more eloquent than words, statistics more irresistible than arguments, place this important point beyond the possibility of a doubt. While under its native princes, the state of capital in India was so insecure that twelve per cent was the common, and thirty-six per cent no unusual rate of interest: under the British rule, the interest of the public debt has, for the first time in Eastern history, been lowered to five per cent; and at that reduced rate, the capitalists of Arabia and Armenia daily transmit their surplus funds for investment in the Company's stock, as the most secure one in the East. Of the public debt of £47,000,000, a large proportion is due to native or Asiatic capitalists; and such is the unbounded confidence in the good faith and probity of the government, that bales stamped with their signet circulate unopened, like coined money, through the vast empire of China. So complete has been the protection, so ample the security enjoyed by the inhabitants of the British provinces compared with what obtains under their native rajahs, that the people from every part of India flock, as Bishop Heber has observed, to the three Presidencies; and the extension of the Company's empire, in whatever direction, is immediately followed by a vast concourse of population, and increase of industry, by the settlers from the adjoining native dominions.¹

¹ Sinclair's
Account of
India, 13, 27.
Heber's
India, iii. 274.
Life, i. 98,
211, ii. 74,
114.

Brilliant as has been the career of England in the European world during the last half century, there are several circumstances in its internal situation which cannot be contemplated without painful feelings. Among these,

the constant and uninterrupted increase of crime through all the vicissitudes of peace and war, unchecked by penal vigilance, undiminished by intellectual cultivation, is one of the most alarming. But under the British empire in the East, a very different and much more satisfactory progress has taken place. Rapid as has been the *growth* of crime in the European dominions of England during the last half century, its *decrease* in her Eastern possessions has been still more striking; and the steady powerful rule of a central government has done as much for the inhabitants of Hindostan, as the vices consequent on a corrupted manufacturing population have undone for the people of Great Britain.* From the returns of commitments and crime in many different provinces of India for the last thirty years, it distinctly appears that crime has, during that period, diminished one half, in many places sunk to a sixth, in the East; while it has in the same time more than quadrupled in the British islands, and in Ireland multiplied ninefold.† Nor is it difficult to perceive to what cause this remarkable difference is owing. Robbery and plunder, the crimes of violence, were those chiefly prevalent in India, growing out of the lawless habits which ages of misrule had diffused through a large portion of the population. These savage and dangerous crimes have been every where severely repressed, in some districts totally extirpated, by the strong and steady arm of the English government. The long-established hordes of robbers have been in most places dissolved; the Pinda-rees, who so long spread ruin and desolation through central India, rooted out: the gangs of Dacoits and Looties, who levied a frightful tax on honest industry, transported or broken up. But if this unwonted feeling of security against hostile spoliation is so generally perceptible even in the provinces which have enjoyed the benefit of English protection for the longest period, what must it be to those which have been lately rescued from a state of anarchy, misery, and bloodshed, unparalleled in the modern history of the world? ¹

“Nothing,” says an intelligent observer, in 1829, “can be more gratifying to an Englishman than to travel through the central and western provinces, so long the

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9.

Great dimi-
nution of
crime under
the British
rule.

¹ Statistical
Tables in
Martin's
India, ix. 322,
329.

* See Appendix, Note A.

† See Appendix, Note B.

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10.
Great change
effected in
the aspect of
the country
in the central
and western
provinces.

theatre of merciless and oppressive war, and to witness the wonderful change which has every where been wrought. Every village in that part of the country was closely surrounded by fortifications, and no man ventured to go to the labours of the plough or the loom without being armed with his sword and shield. Now the forts are useless, and are slowly crumbling into ruin; substantial houses begin for the first time to be built in the *open plain*; cultivation is extended over the distant and undefended fields; the useless encumbrance of defensive armour is laid aside; and the peasant may fearlessly venture to enjoy the wealth and comforts which his industry and labour enable him to acquire. In short, the course of events within the last fifteen years has done more than the whole preceding century, to improve the condition of the middle and lower classes through the whole of India; to give them a taste for the comforts and conveniences of life, and to relieve their industry from the paralysis under which a long continuance of internal dissension had caused it to sink. Englishmen, who have so long been blessed with internal tranquillity, and to whom the idea of an invasion presents only a vague and indistinct notion of confusion, bloodshed, and rapine, can hardly conceive the rapturous delight which animates the Hindoo peasant, who has had from time immemorial a wretched experience of these frightful realities, or the gratitude he feels to those who protect him from them, who enable him to reap his harvest in security, defend his home from profanation, and his property from the never-ending extortion of the powerful.”¹

¹ Sinclair's
India, 8, 9.
Heber's In-
dia, iii. 336;
and Life, 314.

11.
Rapid pro-
gress of
wealth, po-
pulation, and
comfort, over
all India.

The progress, accordingly, of wealth, comfort, and population during the last twenty years, especially in central India, has been rapid in a most extraordinary degree; and even that short period of firm pacific administration has gone far to obliterate the deep furrows which the devastating wars and interminable oppression of former times had produced. Old neglected tanks have been cleared out, their banks restored and again filled with vivifying floods; roads repaired or struck out anew in the most important lines of communication; harbours excavated, bridges erected, aqueducts constructed, with all the advantages of European skill; irrigation spread

over the thirsty plains, and cultivation extended far into the open country, at a distance from any villages, the centres, in former times, of all the operations of human labour.* Villages, almost beyond the power of enumeration, have risen up from their ruins in every part of the country; the ryots around them are to be seen cheerfully cutting into the jungle, and chasing the leopard and the tiger from their hereditary haunts;† an entirely new feature in Indian society has arisen, a *middle class*, which is gradually approximating to the yeomanry of the Western world; and the never-failing symptoms of a prosperous population have generally appeared—a great increase in the numbers of the people, co-existent with a marked elevation in their standard of comfort and individual prosperity.^{1‡}

¹ Heber, iii. 252. Mart. ix 336, 352
Sinclair, 29
Malcolm's
Central India, App.

The effect of this progressive elevation in the situation of the middle, and improvement in the circumstances of the lower orders, has already been strongly and beneficially felt in the extended commercial intercourse between India and the British islands. The growing taste for British manufactures of almost every kind, as well as the increased capability of the working-classes to purchase them, in every part of Hindostan, has been remarked by Bishop Heber; and the same gratifying change has, since his time, been noticed by not less competent observers. The gradual rise of the more opulent of the working into a middle class, has spread a taste among them for luxuries and conveniences to which their fathers, during the many ages of previous native oppression, were strangers. The calicoes and long cloths of Manchester and Paisley have now obtained as undisputed possession of the markets of the East, as the hardwares of Sheffield, Birmingham, and Leeds; and the abundance and cheapness of British manufactures have diffused a taste for these articles among classes who formerly never had a wish beyond the

12.
Increased
taste for
British manu-
factures
over India.

* The public works undertaken and carried through by the British government in India, especially in the formation of roads, bridges, aqueducts, canals, harbours, tanks, &c., almost exceed belief; and though less pompously set forth in official reports, equal those which have shed such an imperishable lustre over the reign of Napoleon in Europe. An enumeration of them will be found in the *Parl. Papers* in 1833, and an abstract in MARTIN, ix. 344-349. The roads constructed under Lord W. Bentinck's administration alone, in 1831, extended to 1784 miles, and 10,000 persons were employed on them.—MARTIN, ix. 349.

† See Appendix, Note C.

‡ See Appendix, Note D.

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¹ Sinclair, 29,
30. Heber, iii.
284. Martin,
ix. 353, 355.

13.
Vast police
force estab-
lished
throughout
Bengal, and
its admirable
effects.

² Martin, ix.
94, 96. Auber,
553.

mere necessities of life. While the industry of Indian artisans was, in former times, exclusively directed to fabricate only the coarsest articles for the poorer, and the most costly luxuries for the richer classes, the rapid increase of the consumption of a superior sort of fabric, (still much below the cachmere shawls and brocades of the rich,) unknown till within these twenty years in any part of Hindostan, marks the slow but gradual growth, under British protection, of an intermediate class in society, superior to the naked ryot, but inferior to the pampered zemindar: while, by one of those changes which bespeak the revolutions of ages, and measure the difference in the progress of different quarters of the globe, the cotton of India, transported to the British shores and manufactured by the refinements of European machinery, is sent back to the East, and by its greater cheapness, has opened to a class who never before could enjoy them, the comforts of the original produce of Hindostan.^{1*}

The extraordinary diminution of crime, especially of a violent kind, in all parts of the Indian peninsula of late years, and progressive amelioration of the people, is in a great measure to be ascribed to the extensive and powerful police force which is very generally established. The discipline and organisation of this civil body is admirable; and such is its extent, that in the provinces of Bengal and Bahar it numbers one hundred and sixty thousand men in its ranks. In most villages there are two or three, in many, ten or twelve of this protective force permanently established. Europeans may feel astonished at the magnitude of this establishment; but experience has completely demonstrated that it is highly useful, and indeed indispensable, amidst the habits of lawless violence to which ages of license and rapine have inured the inhabitants of India. The rapid diminution of crimes of violence in Bengal under the operation of this preventive system, proves that a remedy has been discovered and applied to the prevailing causes of evil in those regions. Would that human wisdom could devise an equally effectual preservative against the passion for illicit gain, sensual indulgence,² and habitual

* See Appendix, Note E.

intoxication, which are now, like a gangrene, overspreading the face of society in the British islands!

Taxation in India is for the most part direct; that is, it consists of the rent of lands belonging in property to the government, and which, from time immemorial, have been devoted to the maintenance of the supreme authority. Of the nineteen millions which at present constitute the general revenue of India, nearly eleven millions are drawn in this manner from the produce of the government lands. The principle on which this immense revenue is derived from the soil, has no analogy to the European land-tax, which is a burden superinduced upon the owner of the rent; it is, on the contrary, the rent itself. The modes in which this tax is levied over India are three: either a perpetual settlement with, or fixed rent constantly payable by, the proprietors of land; or a temporary settlement with the heads of villages or townships; or a definite settlement with each individual occupant of the ground. These different modes of taxation are all founded on one principle, which is universally admitted and acknowledged in every part of Hindostan; viz. that government, as the paramount owner of the soil, has right to a certain portion of the gross produce of every foot of cultivated land, which may be commuted generally or partially, by permanent or partial settlements, with classes of men or separate individuals, but never can be wholly alienated by any ruler to the prejudice of his successors. Government, therefore, in India, is at once the ruling power and the universal landlord in the state; and hence the general and omnipotent influence which its severity or justice has upon the prosperity and well-being of the people, and the immediate effect of the British sway—by whose agents the collection of rent has been fixed, upon comparatively equitable principles—upon the welfare of the humbler classes.¹

When the East India Company came into possession of the Bengal provinces, they found the land revenue every where collected by the intervention of officers under the Mahomedan government, who had charge of districts or provinces under the title of *zemindars*. These officers were paid by a percentage on the sums which they collected: the utmost irregularity and abuse generally exis-

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14.
Principles of
Indian taxation.

¹ Com. Report, 1832, 2, 29. Martin, ix. 116. Heber, iii. 275.

15.
Management
of land. The
Zemindar
System.

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ted ; military force was constantly resorted to, to enforce the collection ; and some of them held their offices for life only, others transmitting them, by hereditary succession, to their descendants. Misled by the analogy of European institutions, or desirous of laying the foundation for their establishment in the East, Marquis Cornwallis, in 1793, conceived and carried into effect the idea of transforming the zemindars into landed proprietors, by conferring upon them and their descendants an indefeasible right to the territories over which their powers extended, so long as they continued to pay regularly the fixed land-tax to government. The propriety of this change was very much doubted at the time, and gave rise to a long and interesting controversy ; but it was, nevertheless, carried into execution, and now forms the basis on which the taxation of two hundred thousand square miles of the Bengal territory, a district more than twice the size of Great Britain, is founded. Though framed on the principles of benevolence and moderation, it has, however, like almost all similar institutions borrowed from the analogy of other nations, and a different state of society, proved altogether ineffective for the principal object in view. The zemindars could not, by the mere regulation of the Company, be converted from Asiatic to European habits : instead of acquiring the interests and views of hereditary landholders, they continued to act with the characteristic improvidence of Eastern rulers. To squeeze the last farthing, by any means, how unjust soever, from the ryots, and squander it in extravagance or luxury upon themselves or their families, was the general practice : numbers were ruined and dispossessed by the Company, who exacted the quit-rent with unrelenting and injudicious rigour ; and thus no step was made towards the formation of a landed aristocracy, while no alleviation was experienced in the burdens of the poor.¹

¹ Parl. Pap. 1831, 3115, *et seq.* 1832, p. 21.

16.
Its practical
operation.

The evil, in effect, became so great, that it has in some degree worked out, like all other excessive ills, its own cure. The zemindar system has come in the end to benefit a class of landed proprietors, though not the one which Lord Cornwallis originally intended. From the general ruin which overtook these powerful officers, and the terror every where inspired by the rigorous exactions

of the Company, the price of estates fell so low, that at last it became a prudent matter of speculation to buy land, and look to its returns for the interest of the price. A different and more provident class has thus, to a considerable extent, been introduced into the management of estates; and, as the land-rent which they are required to pay continues fixed, they have the strongest possible inducement to increase by good management the surplus which may accrue to themselves and their families. But, unfortunately, they have not learned in the East to look so far into the future as to see that this is to be most effectually done by equitable and just dealings towards the cultivators: the burdens imposed on the ryots are still generally exorbitant, often ruinous; and the benefits of the British government are felt by that numerous and important class rather by the cessation of war and depredation, than in any practical diminution of the duties legally exigible from them by their landlords.¹

¹ Heber, iii. 273, 275. Mart. ix. 118, 119. Parl. Pap. 1831, Com. 3115, et seq. 1832, p. 21.

Impressed with these evils, a different system was adopted by Sir Thomas Munro, late governor of Madras, in his administration of some of the newly acquired provinces of that presidency. The principle acted on by that able ruler, of whom Mr Canning justly said, that "Asia did not possess a braver warrior, nor Europe a more enlightened statesman," was to consider the ryot, according to the true Oriental principle, as the real proprietor; to dispense altogether with the zemindar or intermediate collector; and to levy the government duties, fixed for ever in amount, directly from the cultivator or landholder, whatever was the size of his possession. It is evident that this system is calculated to be much more beneficial than the zemindar one to the cultivators of the soil; because they are thereby brought directly into contact with government, and participate at once, without the intervention of any middle-man, in the benefit of a fixed quit-rent only being exacted from the land. It has, accordingly, found many and able supporters, and in some districts has been found in practice to be attended with the most admirable effects.* But when so powerful a party as government is brought into

17.
The Ryotwar system.

* See, in particular, a most interesting account of a settlement on these principles in MALCOLM'S *India*, 526, 528. It is also much more beneficial

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immediate contact with the cultivators, in a matter of such vital importance as the rent of land, it is indispensable to the success of the system that its demands should be moderate, and enforced with justice and consideration; and, unfortunately, this can hardly be generally expected under an empire of such immense extent as that of Hindostan, in which the supreme authority is situated at such a distance from the theatre of its fiscal operations, and the judge is often the principal collector of the revenue within the district over which he presides. The land-tax is usually taken at twelve shillings in the pound, of the net produce of the soil; an enormous exaction, rendered still more burdensome by the rigour with which it is collected. The project of bringing the cultivator at once into contact with government, so equitable in theory, has often proved most fallacious in practice; for such is the subdivision of farms in most parts of India, that the immediate collection of the land-revenue by the government collector was soon found to be out of the question. He is obliged to delegate his duties, like a great landed proprietor in Ireland, to a host of subordinate agents, over whose operations or oppression he is little able to keep any effectual control: the treasury officers too often come to esteem a subordinate functionary in proportion to the regularity and amount of his remittances, rather than any other quality: the expenses of collection rise enormously with the multiplication of inferior agents, and the ryot has often little reason to congratulate himself on the exchange of a British collector for a native zemindar.¹

¹ Sinclair, 33,
36. Parl.
Pap. Com.
3156, 4577,
4579. Mart.
ix. 122, 123.

18.
The Village
system.

A third system of land-rents is the *Village* system. This prevails chiefly in the upper districts of India, and is the prevalent institution over the greater part of the East. To it, probably, more than any other cause, the preservation of its population and industry amidst the endless devastations of wars is to be ascribed. Each

to government; as is proved by the fact that, in 1827, the land-tax per head was,—

	Per head.	Per square mile.	Population per square mile.
In Bengal,	22 pence.	23 pence.	244
In Madras,	52 —	17 —	77
In Bombay,	60 —	19 —	76

—*Parl. Papers*, quoted in MARTIN, ix. 123.

village forms a little community or republic in itself, possessing a certain district of surrounding territory, and paying a certain fixed rent for the whole to government. As long as this is regularly paid, the public authorities have no title to interfere in the internal concerns of the community: they elect their own *mocuddims*, or head men, who levy the proportions of the quit-rent from each individual, settle disputes, and allocate to each profession or individual the share of the general produce of the public territory which is to belong to it or him. As the community is justly desirous of avoiding any pretext for the interference of the state collectors in its internal concerns, they make good the quota of every defaulter from the funds of his neighbours, so as to exhibit no defalcation in the general return to government. The only point in which the interference of the national authorities is required is, in fixing the limits of the village territories in a question with each other, which is done with great care by surveyors, in presence of the competing parties and their witnesses, and a great concourse of the neighbouring inhabitants. In times of trouble they arm and fortify themselves, drive their cattle within their walls, and often contrive, by the payment of a certain contribution, to avoid the evils of actual pillage, even by the most considerable armies. These villages are, indeed, frequently burned or destroyed by hostile forces, the little community dispersed, and its lands restored to a state of nature; but when better times return, and the means of peaceable occupation are again recovered, the remnant reassemble with their children in their paternal inheritance. A generation may pass away, but the succeeding generation return: the sons take the place of their fathers; the same trades and occupations are filled by the descendants of those who formerly filled them: the same division of lands takes place; the very houses are rebuilt on the site of those which had been destroyed; and, emerging from the storm, the community revives, "another and the same."¹

¹ Commons' Committee, 1832, p. 29. Lords, 398, 399, 405, 529. Mart. ix. 120, 121.

It is in these village municipalities that the real secret of the durability of society in the East is to be found. If we contemplate the desolating invasions to which, from the earliest times, the Asiatic monarchies have been

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19.
Admirable
effect of the
Village Sys-
tem in all
ages.

exposed from their proximity to the regions of central Asia; if we reflect on the wide-spread devastation consequent on the twelve dreadful irruptions of the Tartars into Hindostan; and recollect that society, in the intervals of these terrific scourges, has invariably been subjected to the varied but never-ending oppression of different rulers, who seemed to have no other idea of government but to extract as large contributions as possible from the people—it seems surprising how the human race did not become extinct under such a succession of calamities. But amidst those multiplied evils, the village system has provided an unheeded, but enduring and effectual refuge for mankind. Invasion may succeed invasion, horde after horde may sweep over the country—dynasty may overturn dynasty, revolution be followed by revolution; but the wide-spread foundations of rural society are unchanged. The social families bend, but break not, beneath the storm; industry revives in its ancient seats, and in its pristine form, under whatever government ultimately prevails; and the dominant power, intent only on fresh objects of plunder or aggrandisement, rolls past these unheeded fountains of industry and population. The Hindoos, the Patans, the Moguls, the Mahrattas, the Sikhs, and the English, have all been masters in turn; but the village communities remain the same. Abuses and oppression, without doubt, may prevail in this as in all other human institutions; but its extensive establishment and long duration in the East, prove that it has been found capable by experience of affording tolerable security to the labouring classes; and perhaps by no other means, in the absence of those effective bulwarks of freedom which the intelligence, hereditary succession, and free spirit of Europe create, is the inestimable blessing of protection to humble industry to be so generally and effectually obtained. The whole upper and western provinces of Bengal, the greater part of the Bombay territories, the ceded districts on the Nerbuddah, and the province of Tanjore, comprising about 260,000 square miles, are assessed according to this system.¹

¹ Com. Rep.
1831, 3119,
3123, 3129,
3130. Mart.
ix. 120, 122.

The concentration in the hands of government of so large a proportion of the surplus produce of the earth, as

is effected by the great land-tax of India, is undoubtedly prejudicial to society, in so far as it prevents the growth of that important class, so well known in European civilisation—a body of hereditary independent landed proprietors. But it is attended by this important advantage, that it renders the other imposts of the state extremely trifling. Of the total revenue of £19,500,000, more than a half is derived from the land revenue; and of the indirect taxes, nearly two-thirds are laid on the single articles of salt and opium.* When we reflect on the numerous taxes which are levied on almost every article of consumption in Great Britain, this must appear no small recommendation of the Eastern system. It is obviously the same advantage to a nation to have a considerable portion of its revenue derived from crown lands, as it is to have its ecclesiastical or charitable institutions supported by separate property of their own. In either case, the cost of these expensive establishments, essential to the protection, religious instruction, or relief of the people, is laid upon their own funds, instead of being imposed as a burden upon the earnings of the other classes of the community. It is, perhaps, the most remarkable instance of political blindness on record, that the republican party, both in France and England, should so long have endeavoured, and in the former country successfully, to destroy the property both of the church and the corporations holding funds devoted to the purposes of charity and education; that is, to terminate the payment of these necessary establishments by their own funds, and throw their maintenance as a tax on the wages of labour. And, without going the length of the opinion, that the Oriental system is preferable to the landed proprietors of modern Europe, with the stability which they confer upon society, it may safely be asserted, that the receipt of a considerable portion of the public revenue from landed property, vested in government or public bodies, is an invaluable feature in political institutions, and the very last which a real patriot would seek to subvert.

Religious difference, and the exclusive possession of power by persons of one ecclesiastical establishment,

* See Appendix, Note F.

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20.

Effects of this
large land
revenue on
the general
system of
taxation.

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21.

Complete sys-
tem of tolera-
tion estab-
lished in
India.

political party, or dominant race, have been found to be the great obstacles to the pacification of the kingdoms of modern Europe; and in the centre of her power, England has found it impossible to conciliate the affections or overcome the antipathy of the Roman Catholic inhabitants of Ireland. But, in her Eastern empire, political exclusion far more rigid, religious distinctions far more irreconcilable, have, under the able and judicious management of the Company, proved no obstacle to the consolidation of a vast and peaceable dominion. In India, notwithstanding the long period that some districts have been in British possession, and the universal peace which reigns from Cape Comorin to the Himalaya mountains, the natives are still ineligible to offices of trust, both in the civil and military departments. In religion, the principle of separation is still more rigid. Hindostan has, in different ages, been overrun, not merely by conquerors of different races, agreeing only in their ferocity to the vanquished, but by hosts of totally distinct and irreconcilable religious creeds. The mild and pacific followers of Bramah have in different ages been obliged to bow the neck to the fierce idolaters of Cabul, the rigid followers of Shiva, the savage pagans of Tartary, the impetuous fire-worshippers of Persia, the triumphant followers of Mahomet, the disciplined battalions of Christ. These different and hostile religions have imprinted their traces deeply and indelibly on the Hindoo population; and of the hundred and forty millions who now inhabit the vast Peninsula to the south of the Himalaya mountains, a considerable proportion still follow the faith of the dominant races from which they severally sprang.

25.

Vast varie-
ties of religi-
ous belief
found in
India.

Fifteen millions of Mussulmans, haughty in manners, indolent in character, voluptuous in disposition, even now recall the era when the followers of Mahomet issued from their burning deserts, with the sword in one hand and the Koran in the other, to win, through the blood of conquest, a path to the houris of Paradise. Sixty millions of pacific Hindoos on the banks of the Ganges, still continue the worship of Bramah and Vishnu, which has endured unchanged for four thousand years. Fifteen millions of hardy freebooters, in the upper provinces.

follow a mixed creed, in which the tenets of Islamism and the doctrines of the Hindoo faith are strangely compounded together. Heathens and cannibals are found in great numbers in the hilly regions of the north-eastern frontier; a numerous fragment of Parsees or fire-worshippers, scattered through various parts of India, still preserve, untainted by foreign usage, the pure tenets, charitable practices, and elevating worship of Zoroaster. Jews are to be seen in many places, whose Old Testament, coming down no farther than the Babylonian captivity, indicates that they had strayed to the East after that memorable event; while a small number of Christians have preserved inviolate, through eighteen hundred years, the fundamental principles of the Gospel, and traces are to be found in some remote quarters of the lost tribes of the children of Israel.¹

¹ Mart. ix.
207, 233.
Sinclair, 40,
48, 49.

At first sight it would be natural to conclude, that this extraordinary combination of different religions in one community would produce an insurmountable difficulty in conducting the government, and that the strength of a united empire could never be obtained with such various and discordant materials. The reverse, however, is so much the case, that it is owing to this, more perhaps than any other cause, that the subjection of so great a body of natives to the government of a handful of Europeans is to be ascribed. The Indian population is divided into so great a number of different faiths, that no one is predominant or can claim an undisputed pre-eminence over the others; and political power has so long been dissevered from religious belief, that it no longer constitutes a bond of union by which any formidable coalition can be held together. Not only are there to be found Hindoos of every province, tribe, and dialect, in the ranks of the British native army, but the worshippers of Shiva, the adorers of Vishnu, a multitude of Mahommedans, both of the Soonee and Shiah sects, Protestant and Catholic half-castes, and even Jews and Ghebirs. By this intermixture, unparalleled in history, the chances of any considerable combination, either for the purposes of military revolt or political hostility, have been considerably reduced. Although all classes live together on terms of mutual forbearance, this amazing

23.
Effect of this
religious di-
vision in
facilitating
the govern-
ment of the
country.

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¹ Sinclair,
48, 49. Mal-
colm, Cen-
tral India, i.
42, 47.

24.
Vast variety
of national
character in
India.

diversity of religious sentiment in no way interferes with military subordination. No sooner are their professional duties at an end, than the distinctions of religion and caste return with undiminished influence. When the regimental parade is dismissed, the soldiers break into separate knots; the gradation of caste is restored, the distinctions of faith return; the Sudra sergeant makes his *salaam* to the Brahmin or the Rajpoot private; the Mussulman avoids the Christian, the Shiah the Soonee, the Hindoo all; and an almost impassable barrier of mutual distrust and jealousy obstructs all amalgamation of opinion, or unity of action, even upon those national objects which separately interest the whole body. Thus the heterogeneous and discordant mass is kept in a state of complete subordination by the only power among them which possesses the inestimable advantage of unity of action; and the British government, strong in its established probity, and the good faith with which it observes its engagements both towards its subjects and its enemies, is enabled to maintain an undisputed dominion over its innumerable and diversified subjects.¹

It is a common opinion in Great Britain—where the real nature of our Eastern dominions is unknown to an extent which, *a priori*, would appear incredible—that the whole of India is inhabited by a race of meek and inoffensive Hindoos, who willingly bow the neck to every invader who chooses to oppress them, and are incapable, alike from their character, climate, and ignorance, of opposing any effectual resistance to a European invader. The slightest acquaintance, not merely with Indian but Asiatic history, must be sufficient to demonstrate the unfounded nature of this opinion. In no part of the world, perhaps, has foreign conquest implanted its traces in more indelible features on the original population; in none is variety of present character and qualities so conspicuous. So far from the inhabitants of India being all of one description, alike timid and inoffensive, there is within its limits to be found a greater intermixture of races than in any part of the world, and as large a proportion of hardy valour and desperate daring as in any people recorded in history. Bishop Heber

justly observes, that there is as great a disparity between the inhabitants of Guzerat, Bengal, the Duab, and the Deccan, as between any four nations of Europe ; and that the inhabitants of the presidencies of Madras and Bombay, and of the Deccan, are as different from each other as the French and Portuguese from the Greeks, Germans, or Poles. Independent of the varieties of the proper Indian race, which are innumerable, there are to be found in the peninsula of Hindostan at least *thirty* distinct nations, speaking different languages, and almost entirely unknown to each other. The Mahrattas are as much strangers to the people of Bengal as to the Europeans ; the inhabitants of the Carnatic are foreign to both ; the Sikhs have scarcely any resemblance to the Mahrattas ; and even the fifteen millions of Mahommedans have no common bond but their religion, and exhibit the descendants of adventurers from all the nations of Asia, who crowded to the standards of the Prophet.¹

¹ Heber's India, iii. 262. Crawford's Eastern Archipelago, i. 47, 54.

If we penetrate into more distant possessions, the varieties of human character are still more remarkable. The inhabitants of the swamps of Arracan, or the meadows of the Irrawuddy, are as distinct from the highlanders of Nepaul as the rice-growers of the Ganges are from the horsemen of Mysore, or the Pindarees of Malwa. It was in the plains of Bengal alone that the British force met with the genuine Hindoo race, and there victory was of comparatively easy acquisition. But as foreign aggression, or the necessities of their situation, forced them into more distant warfare, they were brought into collision with nations as fierce, and forces as formidable, as any that are arrayed under the banners of Western Europe. The desperate defence of Saragossa, the obstinate valour of Aspern, the enthusiastic gallantry of the Tyrol, have all their parallels in the annals of Indian warfare ; and the heroism with which Napoleon and his redoubtable followers resisted and overcame these varied forms of hostility, was not greater than that with which the British soldiers, and their worthy native allies, combated on the plateau of Mysore, the hills of Nepaul, the plains of Hindostan, or the mountains of Affghanistan. The harassing hostility and terrible sweep of the Cossacks were fully equalled by the squadrons of Hyder and the Pindaree hordes ;² the

25.
And various military qualities of the inhabitants.

² Mart. ix. 267, 279. Heber's India, iii. 262. Crawford's Eastern Archipelago, i. 47, 54.

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free-born valour of the Tyrolese was rivalled by the heroic resistance of the Goorkhas ; the storm of Badajoz, the devotion of Saragossa, have their parallels in the defence of Bhurtpore and the conquest of Seringapatam ; and the decision and skill which converted the perils of Assaye into a decisive victory, were not outdone by the most illustrious deeds of the immortal Napoleon.

26.
Difference of
character
owing to
physical
causes.

Climate, and physical circumstances, in addition to original difference of race, have exercised their wonted influence on the character of the Indian population. In the flat, hot regions of Bengal, on the shores of the Ganges, and amidst the meanderings of its tributary streams, is to be found a timid, gentle, pacific race : educated, but prone to superstition ; servile to their superiors, but tyrannical to their inferiors ; obsequious, yet treacherous ; skilled in the arts of Eastern adulation, but mild and inoffensive in their intercourse with each other. In the elevated regions of the peninsula, on the other hand, on the high table-land of Mysore, in the wild hills of Almorah, on the lofty mountains of Nepaul, the inhabitants are brave, daring, and impetuous ; glowing with ardour, chivalrous to women, courteous to strangers, glorying in deeds of heroism, faithful in friendship, vehement in hatred. With these elevated qualities are mingled, however, others which belong to the same national character : a fierce and revengeful temper, a disposition uncultivated and impatient of discipline ; habits prone to violence, and nursed in crime by ages of uncontrolled licentiousness. It is in these nations, among the proud Rajpoots, the roving Mahrattas, the daring Affghans, that the restraints of regular government are with most difficulty introduced, and its blessings most sensibly felt by the inhabitants : but it is amongst them also that the military spirit is most prevalent, and the British government has found at once its most faithful and intrepid native defenders, and most desperate and formidable foreign enemies.¹

¹ Malte
Brun, iii.
280, 299.
Mart. ix. 278,
279.

Among all the prodigies attending the British dominions in India, none, perhaps, is so extraordinary as the rise, progress, and fidelity of the SEPOY FORCE. It was in Bombay that these invaluable auxiliaries were originally organised, and the first mention of them in history

is when a corps of one hundred natives from Bombay, and four hundred from Tellicherry, assisted the army at Madras in 1747. From these humble beginnings has arisen the present magnificent native army of India, which at one period embraced nearly three hundred thousand men, and even now, on a reduced peace establishment, numbers a hundred and seventy thousand. Their ranks have from the first been filled indiscriminately with recruits of all nations and religious persuasions; and Mahommedans, Hindoos, Parsees, Jews, and Christians are to be found blended among them, without the distinction of race having ever interfered with the unity of action, or the difference of religion ever shaken fidelity to duty. The whole have throughout been raised entirely by voluntary enrolment, without a conscription or forced levy having ever been found necessary; and, great as the present army is, it could be quadrupled in a few months, if the circumstances of the Indian government required such an augmentation of force. The facility with which vast armies can be raised in the East, when compared to the violent measures by which it has been found necessary in Europe to accomplish the same object, appears at first sight surprising. But it ceases to be so, when the effects of the distinction of castes, and the relative situation of the sepoy soldiers and the other classes of the community, are taken into consideration.¹

The military form a distinct caste in all the Hindoo communities; and from father to son deeds of arms are handed down, as the only object of honourable ambition,—the true incitement to glorious exploit. The Rajpoot of Bengal is born a soldier. The mother recounts acts of heroism to her infant; from earliest youth he is habituated to the use and exercise of arms. Even when still a child, the future warrior is accustomed to handle the spear and dagger, and to look without fear on the implements of death. If his father tills the ground, the sword and shield are placed near the furrow, and moved as his labour advances. The frame of the youth is constantly strengthened by martial exercises; he is habitually temperate in his diet; of a generous though warm disposition; and, if well treated, zealous, faithful, and obedient. It was from this military caste that the chief Indian armies² were

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27.

Origin and
composition
of the sepoy
force.¹ Orme's
Hindustan,
i. 72. Mar-
tin, ix. 64,
65.

28.

Causes of the
facility with
which it has
been raised.² Sir J.
Malcolm in
Quart. Rev.
xviii. 414,
415. Orme's
Hindustan, i.
72, 104.
Mart ix. 64,
65. Sinclair,
46.

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first recruited, and they still form the strength of the native infantry. In process of time, however, as our empire has extended into more distant regions, the military qualities of its varied inhabitants have been called into action; and the desultory activity of the Mahratta horse, not less than the firm intrepidity of the Mysore cavalry, and the chivalrous valour of the Affghan gunners, have contributed to the formation of our mighty dominions.

29.
Elevated
rank and
situation of
the sepoy
troops.

Unlike the soldier of Europe, the sepoy is an object of envy to his less fortunate compatriots. His profession gives him the precedence, not less in general estimation than in that of his caste, over persons engaged in civil occupations; and his pay is so considerable as to raise him, both in station and enjoyments, far above his brethren whom he has left behind in his native village. Each private sepoy is attended by two servants: in the field there are, at an average, nine followers to every two fighting men: a system which gives to a hundred thousand men, in a campaign, nearly five hundred thousand attendants; and goes far to explain both the prodigious hosts recorded in history, as commanded by Xerxes and Darius, and the facility with which they were routed by a comparatively small body of Greeks, all real soldiers. Such a mode of carrying on war augments to a great degree the difficulty of providing subsistence for so prodigious a multitude as attend every considerable army,* but it renders it comparatively an easy matter to raise a military force. When the pay given to a private soldier is so considerable as to admit of his keeping two servants in the camp, and a still greater number in the field, no want of recruits will ever be experienced. The real difficulty is to find resources adequate to the support of a large army at that elevated standard. When Cromwell gave half-a-crown a-day to every dragoon, he readily got recruits for the Parliamentary armies.¹

¹ Malte
Brun, iii.
328. Martin,
ix. 79, 80.

The Indian infantry can hardly be said to be equal,

* When General Harris advanced against Seringapatam in 1799, his army was composed of 35,000 fighting men and 120,000 attendants; and when Marquis Hastings took the field in 1817, against the Mahrattas, his whole regular forces, amounting to 110,000 men, were swelled by above 500,000 camp followers; among whom, chiefly of the lower grades in society, and persons habituated to the humblest fare, the cholera made the most unheard-of ravages.
—MALTE BRUN, iii. 328.

even when led by British officers, to that of England, and, when left to the direction of their own leaders, evince the general inferiority of the Asiatic race to the European ; but it is only in the last extremity or most trying situations that this difference is conspicuous, and for the ordinary duties of a campaign, no troops in the world are superior to the sepoys. In many of the most essential duties of a soldier—sobriety during duty, patience under privation, docility in learning, hardihood in undergoing fatigue, steady enduring valour, and fidelity to their colours under every temptation to swerve from them, the Indian auxiliaries might serve as a model to every service in Europe. Nay, examples are numerous, in which, emulous of the fame of their British comrades, they have performed deeds of daring worthy of being placed beside the most exalted of European glory ; and instances are not wanting where they have unhesitatingly faced dangers before which even English troops had recoiled.* The native cavalry is of more recent introduction than the infantry, but it is not less admirable in many of the most valuable qualities : the men are fearless riders, indefatigable in the service of light troops, sober and vigilant ; they take exemplary care of their horses, many of which are of the best Persian and Arabian breeds, and in the sword exercise or single combat are superior to almost any of the cavaliers of Europe. Nor is the artillery

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30.

General
character of
the Indian
army.

* At the first siege of Bhurtpore, in 1805, the 12th regiment of native Bengal infantry was associated with the 75th and 76th British infantry, whose deeds of valour they had emulated at the battle of Laswarree. The British were first led to the assault, and gallantly mounted the breach ; but they were driven back with dreadful slaughter ; and such was the panic inspired by the disaster, that, when they were ordered a second time to advance, the soldiers refused to follow their officers or leave the trenches. The second battalion of the 12th native regiment was then ordered to advance ; they did so with resolute steps, though well aware of the desperate nature of the service on which they were sent, and cheered as they passed the English troops, who lay sheltered in the trenches. Such was the heroic valour of their onset that they overcame all opposition, and planted their colours, in sight of the whole army, on the summit of the breach. This work, unfortunately, was cut off by a deep ditch from the body of the fortress, and, finding it impossible to pass that barrier, Lord Lake was reluctantly obliged to order a retreat. It was with great difficulty, however, that the brave sepoys could be prevailed on to retire from the perilous post of honour which they had won, and not till they had sustained a loss of three hundred and sixty men, being half their total number when they went into action. The British regiment, stung with shame, now implored to be allowed to return to the assault, which was granted ; but, notwithstanding their desperate valour, it was still unsuccessful.—See MARTIN, viii. 30-31, and ix. 69-70. The author has frequently heard this anecdote from his late lamented brother-in-law, Colonel Gerard, Adjutant-General of the Bengal army, who was present on the occasion—an officer to whose talents, zeal, and bravery, the wonders of Lord Lake's campaign are, in a considerable degree, to be ascribed.

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¹ Martin, ix.
83. Wil-
liams's
Indian army,
32, 68.
Quart. Rev.
xviii. 414,
415.

inferior to any in the world, either in the perfection of the material, the condition of the horses, or the coolness, precision, and bravery of the gunners. The immense host is entirely under the direction of British officers, nearly five thousand of whom are employed in this important service; but the non-commissioned officers and subalterns always were natives, and the avenue to more elevated promotion is now opened to the most deserving of their number.* In the shock of a regular charge alone, the native horse is still inferior to the British—a peculiarity which has distinguished the cavalry of the eastern and western worlds in every age, from the days of Cyrus to those of the Crusades.¹

31.
Touching
anecdotes of
the fidelity of
sepoy troops.

Volumes might be filled with the anecdotes which have occurred within the last eighty years, illustrative of the steady courage and incorruptible fidelity of the sepoy troops. They first rose to eminence in the wars of Lord Clive, Lawrence, Smith, and Coote, in the middle of the last century; and the number of Europeans who were then engaged in Indian warfare was so inconsiderable, that almost the whole glory of their marvellous victories is in reality due to the sepoys. The hardships which were undergone, at this period, by all the soldiers, both native and European, from the defective state, or rather total want of a commissariat, were excessive; but although the British power was then only in its infancy, and little promised future stability to its empire, nothing could shake the fidelity of the Indian troops. On one occasion, when the provisions of Clive's garrison of Arcot were very low, and a surrender, in consequence, appeared unavoidable, the Hindoo soldiers entreated their commander to allow them to boil their rice, the only food left for the whole garrison. "Your English soldiers," said they, "can eat from our hands, though we cannot from theirs: we will allow them as their share every grain of the rice, and subsist ourselves by drinking the water in which it has been boiled." In the year 1780, 1781, and 1782, the whole army suffered hardships almost unparalleled; there

* The British officers in the Indian army amount to 4487; the Indian to 3416; but the latter cannot rise to a higher rank than that of ensign or cornet. The total British troops in India amount at present to 30,915 sabres and bayonets, of whom 19,540 are composed of the Queen's regiments; the remainder being English in the service of the East India Company; but the expense of the whole is defrayed by the Indian government.—MARTIN, ix. 73, 79-81.

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was hardly a corps that was not twenty months in arrear, and their families, under the pressure of a dreadful famine, were expiring on all sides; nevertheless their fidelity never gave way under this extreme trial, and they repaid with gratitude and attachment, the consideration, to them unwonted, with which they were treated by their European officers. The campaigns of Sir Eyre Coote and Lord Clive, in which they bore so prominent a part, still form an object of well-founded pride to the sepoy of Madras; and when a regiment comes into garrison, they lead their children into the great room of the exchange of that capital, to point out the portraits of the chiefs who first led their fathers to victory.¹

¹ Sir John Malcolm, in Quart. Rev. xviii. 389, 396.

Towards the close of the war with Tippoo, in 1782, General Mathews, with his whole troops, almost entirely native, were made prisoners. The Sultaun, sensible of the advantages he might derive from the services of so large a body of disciplined men in his ranks, made every effort to induce the English sepoy to enter his army, but in vain. He then tried severity, and subjected them for long to the most rigorous confinement and unhealthy employments; but nothing could shake their fidelity; and at the peace of 1783, fifteen hundred of these brave men marched a distance of five hundred miles to Madras, to embark and rejoin the army to which they belonged, at Bombay. During the march, the utmost pains were taken by Tippoo's guards to keep the Hindoo privates separate from their European officers, in the hope that their fidelity might yet sink under the hardships to which they were exposed, but in vain. Not only did they all remain true to their colours, but they swam the tanks and rivers by which they were separated from the officers during the night, bringing them all they could save from their little pittance; "for we," they said, "can live on any thing, but you require beef and mutton." A battalion of the Bombay 12th regiment mutinied in 1764, on account of some promises made to the soldiers having, as they said, been broken. A severe example was thought necessary, and twenty-eight of the most guilty were sentenced to be blown from the mouth of a cannon. As they were on the point of being executed, three grenadiers who happened to be among them,² stepped forward and claimed

32.
Their fidelity to the English under every trial.

² Malcolm, in Quarterly Rev. xviii. 389, 405. Williams's Indian Army, 272, 304.

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the honour of being blown away from the right guns : “they had always fought on the right,” they said, “and they hoped they should be allowed to die at that post of honour.”*

33.
And admir-
able courage.

During the advance of Lord Lake’s army to Delhi and Agra in 1804, the hardships and privations which the troops of all sorts endured were such, as almost to break down the spirit of the British officers ; but the Hindoo privates never showed the least symptoms of faintness or despondence, saying “Keep up your spirits, sir ; we will bring you in safety to Agra.” When in square, and sustaining charges of the enemy’s horse, it more than once happened, when a musket was fired by a young soldier, that a veteran struck him with the but-end of his firelock, exclaiming : “Are you mad to destroy our discipline, and make us like the rabble that are attacking us ?” Nor was the same steady courage and devoted fidelity wanting, on still more trying occasions, when the national or religious prejudices of the native soldier were brought still more violently in collision with their military duties. At the mutiny of Vellore, which shook the Indian empire to its foundation, and was brought on by an absurd interference with the religious feelings of the troops, the sabres of the native dragoons were dyed as deep as those of the British in the blood of their unhappy countrymen ; and on occasion of a recent tumult at Bareilly, the capital of Rohilcund, occasioned by the introduction of a necessary but unpopular police tax—a revolt which commanded the sympathy of the whole neighbouring population—a battalion of the 27th native infantry, with four hundred Rohilla horse recently embodied, were all that could be brought against the insurgents, who were above twelve thousand strong. The mutineers continued to resist till two thousand were slain ; and, although many of the assailants were their relations and neighbours, and the priests of the insurgents advanced and invoked them to join their natural friends,¹ only one

¹ Martin, ix. 66, 72, Williams’s Indian Army, 272, 304. Malcolm, in Quart. Rev. xviii. 389, 415.

* “I am sure,” says Captain Williams, who was an eyewitness of this remarkable scene, “there was not a dry eye among the marines who executed the sentence, though they had long been accustomed to hard service, and two of them had actually been in the execution party which shot Admiral Byng in 1757. The corps to which they belonged, subsequently distinguished itself greatly both at Laswarree and the first siege of Bhurtpore.”—WILLIAMS’S *Indian Army*, 247 ; and *Ante*, Chap. xlvii. § 30, note.

man was found wanting to his duty, and he was immediately put to death by his comrades, who throughout maintained the most unshaken fidelity and courage.

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The secret of this extraordinary fidelity of the native troops, under every temptation, to a foreign power, professing a different religion, and known only by its successive overthrow of all the native potentates, is to be found in the wise and magnanimous policy with which the East India Company, through every vicissitude of fortune, have made good their engagements, and the inviolable fidelity with which they have rewarded the services of the troops engaged in their ranks. From the earliest times the Indian princes have known no other way of paying their troops than by quartering them on some of the hereditary or conquered provinces of their dominions; where, though military license was allowed every latitude in the exaction of their pay or provisions, the soldiers experienced great difficulty, and were subject to a most vexatious uncertainty, in the recovery of their dues. When, therefore, instead of this harassing and oppressive system, the Indian sepoy found that they received their daily pay as regularly as English soldiers; that their wants were all provided for by a vigilant and honest government; that no subaltern fraud or chicanery was permitted to intercept the just rewards of their valour; and that, after a certain number of years' service, they were permitted to retire on ample allowances, or a grant of land which formed a little patrimony to themselves and their descendants*—they were struck with astonishment, and conceived the most unbounded confidence in a power which had thus for the first time set them the example of an upright and beneficent

34.
Which is
owing to the
fidelity of the
English gov-
ernment to
its engage-
ments.

* "I have beheld," says Sir John Malcolm, "with more patriotic pride than has ever been excited in my mind by any other act of British policy in India, a tract of country more than a hundred miles in length upon the banks of the Ganges—which had a few years before been a complete jungle, abandoned for ages to tigers and robbers—covered with cultivated fields and villages, the latter of which were filled with old soldiers and their families, in a manner which showed their deep gratitude and attachment for the comfort and happiness they enjoyed. When we consider the immeasurable quantity of waste land in the dominions of the Company, it appears extraordinary that this plan has not been adopted in every part of British India, upon a more liberal and enlarged scale. The native soldiers of Bengal are almost all cultivators, and a reward of this nature was peculiarly calculated to attach them. The accomplishment of this object would add in an incalculable degree to the ties which we have upon the fidelity of those by whom our dominion in India is likely to be preserved or lost."
—MALCOLM'S *British India*, 1st Edit. 526, 528.

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administration. Power in India is, even more than elsewhere in the world, founded on opinion ; and the belief which gradually spread universally that the East India Company would, with perfect regularity and good faith, discharge all its engagements, formed a magnet of attraction which in the end drew almost all the strength and military virtue of the peninsula to its standards. When minutely examined, it will be found that it was neither the military discipline, nor the scientific acquisitions, nor the political talents of the British which has given them the empire of India, for all these were matched in the ranks of their enemies, recruited and directed as they were by French officers ; but, far more than all these, their HONESTY AND GOOD FAITH, which filled them with confidence in each other, and inspired the same reliance in the native powers ;—qualities which, though often overreached in the outset by cunning and perfidy, generally prove more than a match for them in the end, and are destined ultimately to give to the Anglo-Saxon race the dominion of half the globe.¹

¹ Malcolm's Evidence before parliament, quoted in Martin, ix. 35, 72, 74, 80. Sinclair, 47, 49.

35. Contrast of the Company's rule to the devastating Mahomedan sway which preceded it.

The order and regularity which prevail both in the maintenance of the Indian army, and the administration of its provinces, have produced the greater impression on the natives of the East, from the contrast which they afford to the hideous scenes of devastation and massacre with which, from the earliest times, conquest had been invariably attended in the plains of Hindostan. Throughout the whole period of the Mahomedan ascendancy in the south of India, the same enormities—the never-failing accompaniments of their presence and power—have occurred as in the northern provinces. The annals of this period give a succession of examples of the same unprovoked and devastating warfare : the same struggles for power among the nobles ; the same unbridled lust of conquest in the government ; the same perfidy, treason, and assassination in the transactions of courts ; the same massacres, oppression, and suffering inflicted on the people. It was no unusual thing for sixty, eighty, or a hundred thousand persons of all ages and sexes to be put to death in a single day ; great cities, and even capitals, were at once destroyed and delivered over tenantless to the alligator and the tiger ;

the treasuries of the native princes were invariably filled with the plunder of their defenceless subjects. The system of Mahomedan exaction, at first under the name of contribution, latterly under that of revenue, being every where the same, with the power of rapacious armies to enforce it, the fate of the unhappy people was stamped with permanent wretchedness. Dreadful as were the devastations of war and conquest, they were as nothing compared to the lasting evils of military exaction and cupidity. There was no security whatever either for persons or property: the latter was always considered as the fair object of seizure wherever it was known to exist; and the mass of the people were subject to a state of poverty from which there was no escape—of violence and oppression, against which there was no redress.¹

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¹ Rickard's
India, i. 223,
234. Orme,
b. i. c. 4.
Malte Brun,
iii. 310, 312.

Wars between the native or Mahomedan princes were perpetual, and their devastation extended not merely to the troops or armed men engaged, but to the whole population. Weeping mothers, smiling infants at the breast, were alike doomed to destruction; the march of troops might be tracked by hillocks of bodies and pyramids of human heads, burning villages, and desolated capitals. Under the Mahratta chiefs, who rose upon the decline of the Tartar dynasty, the same boundless rapacity continued, aggravated by the establishment of above twenty petty chiefs, each of whom exercised the right of making war on his own account. The work of devastation was perpetual: massacres, conquests, conflagrations, make up the history of India for the last eight hundred years. So universal had this oppression been, and so deeply rooted had its effects become in the habits of the people, that the display of wealth was universally avoided as the certain forerunner of additional exaction. Property was invariably either buried or invested in diamonds, which admitted of easy concealment: of the vast and fertile plains of India not more than a fourth part was cultivated.* The population was hardly a fifth of what, under a more beneficent government, it might become; while the long-continued drain of the precious metals

36.
Unbounded
devastations
of their for-
mer wars.

* See Appendix, Note G.

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¹ Rickard's
India, i. 223,
224. Orme,
b. i. c. 4.
Martin, ix.
75, 86.
Malte Brun,
iii. 310, 314.

to the East, so well known to politicians of every age, indicated as clearly the precarious tenure of property which rendered concealment indispensable, as the recent and unparalleled occurrence of the *importation* of gold and silver from India, demonstrates the arrival of the era for the first time in Eastern history, when the necessity for hoarding has ceased, and, under British protection, the natural desire for enjoyment can find an unrestrained vent among the natives of Hindostan.¹

37.
Wonderful
nature of
this empire,
won by so
small a force,
and amidst
so many
difficulties at
home.

To complete the almost fabulous wonders of this Oriental dominion, it only requires to be added, that it has been achieved by a mercantile company in an island of the Atlantic, possessing no territorial force at home: who merely took into their temporary pay, while in India, such part of the English troops as could be spared from the contests of European ambition; who never had, at any period, thirty thousand British soldiers in their service, while their civil and military servants did not amount to six thousand; the number of persons under their auspices who proceed yearly to India, is never six hundred, and the total number of white inhabitants who reside among the hundred and forty millions of the sable population, is hardly eighty thousand! So enormous, indeed, is the disproportion between the British rulers and their native subjects, that what the Hindoos say is literally true, that if every one of the followers of Bramah were to throw a handful of earth on the Europeans, they would be buried alive in the midst of their conquests. It augments our astonishment at the wisdom and beneficence of the Indian government, that these marvellous dominions have been gained, and these lasting benefits conferred upon their subjects, during a period checkered by the most desperate wars; when the very existence of the English authority was frequently at stake, and the whole energies of government were necessarily directed, in the first instance, to the preservation of their own national independence. During the growth of this astonishing prosperity in the Indian provinces, the peninsula has been the seat of almost unceasing warfare. It has witnessed the dreadful invasion of Hyder Ali; the two terrible wars with Tippoo Sultaun; the alternations of fortune, from the horrors of the Black Hole at Calcutta

to the storming of Seringapatam; the long and bloody Mahratta wars; the Pindaree conflict; the Goorkha campaigns; the capture of Bhurtpore; the murderous warfare in the Burmese empire; the awful disaster of the Coord-Cabul Pass, the desperate chances of the Sikh invasion. During the seventy years of its recent and unexampled rise, twelve long and bloody wars have been maintained; the military strength of eighty millions of men, headed and directed by French officers, has been broken, and greatness insensibly forced upon the East India Company, in the perpetual struggle to maintain its existence. The Indian government has been but for a short time in the possession of its vast empire: thirty years only have elapsed since the Mahratta confederacy was finally broken; its efforts for a long period have been directed rather to the acquisition or defence of its territories than their improvement; and yet, during this anxious and agitated period, the progress of the sable multitude who are embraced in its rule has been unexampled in wealth, tranquillity, and public felicity.¹

¹ Martin, ix.
73, 77. Sin.
clair, 27.

It was a maxim with the Romans, from which they never deviated, not to undertake two great wars at the same period; but rather to submit even to insults and losses for a time, than bring a second formidable enemy on their hands. Strongly as this principle is recommended, both by its intrinsic wisdom, and the example of that renowned people, it is not always capable of being carried into execution; and the British were frequently compelled in Hindostan, by the pressure of native confederacies, to sustain the most formidable foreign conflicts, at a time when the resources of the monarchy were all required to sustain the fortunes of the state in the contests of European ambition. At the same time that the East India Company, with their brave and faithful sepoy, were successfully combating the immense and disciplined hordes of Hyder Ali and Tippoo Sultaun, the vast American colonies of England, directly ruled by parliament, were severed from the empire without any considerable external aid, by the mere force of internal discontent. The dissatisfaction of Canada has more than once led to alarming collisions between the central government and the native French population; and the West India islands

38.
Wars in
which the
empire was
involved
during the
growth of the
Indian
power.

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1756.

have been restrained only by the inherent weakness of a slave colony from breaking off all connexion with the parent state. The first rise of our Indian empire was contemporaneous with the energetic administration of Chatham, and the glories of the Seven Years' War: the moral courage and decided conduct of Hastings saved it from destruction, at the very moment when the weakness and corruption of Lord North's administration occasioned the loss of the American colonies: the contest with the Mysore Princes occurred at the same time as that with Revolutionary France, and "Citizen Tippoo" was not the least esteemed ally both of the Directory and the Consular government: while the able and vigorous administration of Marquis Wellesley took place when Napoleon was commencing his immortal career in Europe; and Great Britain stretched forth her mighty arms into the Eastern hemisphere, and struck down the formidable confederacy of the Mahratta princes, at the very time when she was engaged in a desperate contest for her existence with the conqueror of continental Europe.

39.
What were
the causes of
this success?
Conquest was
forced upon
the British
by necessity,
not adopted
from inclina-
tion.

It is an interesting object of inquiry—what was the form of government and system of foreign administration under which those astonishing triumphs were achieved by England in the Eastern hemisphere? Were these triumphs, as the continental writers and the enemies of the East India Company assert, the result of a continual system of aggression on their part, like the wars of the Romans in ancient, or the conquests of Napoleon or of Russia in modern times? or were they, as their supporters maintain, forced upon them, much against their will, by native combinations and intrigues, which constantly gave them no other alternative but conquest or ruin? It is observed by a French annalist, and quoted with approbation by the greatest of modern historians, that "in a light of precaution all conquest must be ineffectual, unless it could be universal; since the increasing circle must be involved in a larger sphere of hostility."¹ There can be no doubt that this remark is well-founded, and that it sufficiently explains the experienced impossibility which the British, like all other conquering nations, have felt, of stopping short in their career when once commenced, before they had reached the limits assigned by nature to

¹ Gaillard,
quoted by
Gibbon, c.
49, ix. 187.

their further progress. From the time when they first became territorial sovereigns in the East, and a handful of Europeans ventured to rear the standard of independence among the sable multitudes of Asia, they had no alternative but to go on conquering, in a continually increasing circle, till they came to the snows of the Himalaya and the waves of the Indus. But while the British were, unquestionably, equally with the Romans or Napoleon, exposed to this necessity, yet there was a wide difference in their relative situations, and the consequent readiness with which they may be supposed to have embraced the career of conquest, thus in a manner forced upon them.

Rome had an inexhaustible stock of vigour and capacity in the numerous bands of experienced soldiers whom she nourished in her bosom ; and from the moment that they left the frontiers of the republic, they subsisted at the expense of the allied or conquered states. France vomited forth a host of ardent starving insolvents, to regenerate by plundering all mankind ; and, borrowing from her predecessors in ancient times the maxim that war should be made to maintain war, experienced not less relief to her finances than security to her institutions, by providing either by death or victory for such a multitude of turbulent defenders. But England had a very different task to execute when she became involved in the task of subjugating Hindostan. The centre of her strength was situated fourteen thousand miles from the banks of the Ganges ; a few thousand soldiers were all she could spare for Eastern, from the pressure of European or the dangers of American warfare : the power which was involved in Indian hostilities was a mere company of merchants, who looked only to a profitable return for their capital, or a rise in the value of their stock, and dreaded nothing so much as the cost of unproductive warfare. For thirty years after they were involved in hostilities, so far from effecting any conquests, they were barely able to defend their own mercantile establishments from destruction ; and every foot-soldier they transported from Europe to Hindostan cost thirty, every horseman eighty, pounds sterling. In these circumstances, it requires no argument to demonstrate that foreign aggression could not, in the

46.
Difference
between
Rome and
France, and
England, in
this particu-
lar.

CHAP.
XLVII.

1756.

first instance at least, have been voluntarily entered upon by the East India Company. In fact, the slightest acquaintance with their annals is sufficient to show, that they stood in every instance really, if not formally, on the defensive: and that it was in the overthrow of the coalitions formed for their destruction, or the necessary defence of the allies whom previous victory had brought to their side, that the real cause of all their Indian acquisitions is to be found.

APPENDIX.

CHAPTER XLVII.

Note A, p. 351.

As an example of the rapid diminution of crime in British India within the last twenty years, the convictions for serious crimes in the Court of Nizamut Adawlut, at Calcutta, may be quoted.

Years.	To Death.	Transportation.	Years.	Death.	Transportation.
1816,	115	282	1822,	50	165
1817,	114	268	1823,	77	119
1818,	54	261	1824,	51	145
1819,	94	345	1825,	66	128
1820,	55	324	1826,	67	171
1821,	58	278	1827,	55	153

Circuit Court of Bengal.

Years.	Burglary.	Cattle Stealing.	Embezzlement.	Larceny.
1816 to 1818,	2853	203	150	1516
1825 to 1827,	1036	31	49	223

Lower and Western provinces of Bengal.

Years.	Sentenced.		Gang Robberies.	Murders.
1826,	13,869	1807,	1481	406
1827,	8,075	1824,	234	30

—MARTIN, ix. 322, 329.

Note B, p. 351.

The following table exhibits the increase of committals in the British Islands since the commencement of the present century.

Years.	England.	Ireland.	Scotland.
1805,	4605	2644	89
1807,	4446	2890	114
1820,	9318	12,476	1486
1825,	9964	15,515	1876
1830,	18,107	16,192	2063
1832,	20,829	16,056	2451

1834,	22,451	21,381	2711
1836,	20,984	23,982	2852
1837,	23,612	24,458	2922

—See MOREAU'S *Statist. de la Grande Bretagne*, ii. 289, 297; *Parl. Paper, Commons*, 1812, and *Parl. Returns of Crimes in 1834-6*, PORTER'S *Parl. Tables*, i. 1837, 145, 144, and vii. 122, 140.

Contrast the decrease of crime in different provinces of India during the same period, with the deplorable increase of offences of the same description in the British Islands.

Cases of Shooting, Stabbing, and Poisoning, in England and Wales.

1826,	47	1828,	72	1830,	86	1832,	132
1827,	82	1829,	81	1831,	104	1833,	138

Western Provinces of India.

Affrays with loss of Life.		Homicides.		Violent Depredations.	
1821-23,	232	1818-20,	377	1818-20,	1000
1827-28,	118	1827-28,	185	1827-28,	512

Violent Affrays in Kishennagur.		Gang Robberies in Do.		Bengal Circuit Court, Sentenced.	
1807,	482	1808,	329	1822-24,	2170
1824,	33	1824,	10	1825-27,	1524

Table of Crimes, Persons Apprehended, Convicted, Property Stolen and Recovered, in three years, ending 1832, in the Supreme Court at Calcutta.

Years.	Offences.	Persons Committed.	Convicted.	Property Stolen.	Recovered.
1830,	2330	3556	625	136,383	4854
1831,	1304	1256	675	123,714	33,828
1832,	1329	2023	718	62,981	6793

—ROBERTSON'S *Civil Government of India*; and MARTIN, ix. 326, 335.

State of Sentences for Crime in Lower and Western Provinces of Bengal in two periods of two years each.

	Murder and Robbery.	Do. with torture or wounding.	With Violence.	Murder.	Homicide.	Violent Assault.
Lower Provinces.						
1824 and 1826,	165	283	330	358	303	86
1827 and 1828,	96	194	221	196	248	47
Western Provinces.						
1824 and 1826,	460	901	83	311	311	180
1827 and 1828,	271	512	34	252	185	118

—MARTIN'S *India*, ix. 326.

Contrast this with the increase of serious crime, tried by jury, in Glasgow, during the last fifteen years, and in Ireland in the same period.

GLASGOW, 1822-37.

IRELAND, 1822-37

Years.	Tried by Jury.	Ratio of serious Crime to whole Population in each year in Glasgow.	Committed.
1822,	98	1 to 1540	15,251
1823,	114	— 1366	14,632
1824,	118	— 1361	15,258
1825,	160	— 1037	15,515
1826,	188	— 909	16,318
1827,	170	— 1041	18,031
1828,	212	— 873	14,683
1829,	239	— 790	15,271
1830,	271	— 719	15,794

1831,	238	1 to 848	16,192
1832,	272	— 768	16,036
1833,	341	— 633	17,819
1834,	267	— 838	21,381
1835,	348	— 633	22,367
1836,	329	— 741	23,891
1837,	392	— 645	24,458
1838,	454	— 556	25,683

—PORTER'S *Parl. Tables*, i. 145. *Combination Committee Evidence*, 1838, 267.

Note C, p. 353.

In Holkar's country alone, the number of villages rebuilt and repeopled, was—

Years.	Holkar's country.	Dhar.	Dewar.	Bohpel.
1818,	260	28	35	362
1819,	343	68	106	249
1820,	508	52	72	267

—MALCOLM'S *Central India*, *Appendix*.

Note D, p. 353

The following is a statement of the wages of labour under the Peishwa's government in 1814, and the British in 1828 :—

	1814. PEISHWA'S. Rupees monthly.	1828. BRITISH. Rupees monthly.
Carpenter, . . .	12—40	15—45
Sawyer, . . .	8	15—22
Smith, . . .	12—20	15—30
Tileman, . . .	12	15—18
Bricklayer, . . .	15—20	25—35
Tailor, . . .	6	9—11
Camelman, . . .	5	7—9
Palanquinman, . . .	10	15—16

No change in the value of money during this period.—COLONEL SYKES' *Bombay Statistics*, *Lords' Committee*, 1830; and MARTIN, ix. 352.

Note E, p. 354.

The following table shows the rapid increase in the export trade from Britain to India within the last twenty-five years, and illustrates both the advancing opulence and comfort of the inhabitants of Hindostan, and the incalculable importance of this branch of commerce, if established on principles equitable both toward the East and West, to the inhabitants of the British Islands.

Years.	Exports.	Official Value.	Years.	Exports.	Official Value.
1814,	. . .	£1,874,690	1826,	. . .	£3,471,552
1815,	. . .	2,565,761	1827,	. . .	4,636,190
1816,	. . .	2,589,453	1828,	. . .	4,467,673
1817,	. . .	3,338,715	1829,	. . .	4,100,002
1818,	. . .	3,572,164	1830,	. . .	4,087,311
1819,	. . .	2,347,083	1831,	. . .	4,105,444
1820,	. . .	3,037,911	1832,	. . .	4,235,483
1821,	. . .	3,544,395	1833,	. . .	4,714,619
1822,	. . .	3,444,443	1834,	. . .	4,644,318
1823,	. . .	3,416,575	1835,	. . .	5,456,116
1824,	. . .	3,476,213	1836,	. . .	6,750,842
1825,	. . .	3,173,213	1837,	. . .	5,876,241

—PORTER'S *Parl. Tables*, i. 193, 195; and *Progress of the Nation*, ii. 102.

Note F, p. 361.

The following was the revenue of India in the year 1831-2:—

Land Revenue,	.	.	.	.	£11,671,188
Professions and Ferries,	.	.	.	.	213,072
Salt and Licences,	.	.	.	.	2,314,982
Customs,	.	.	.	.	1,380,099
Opium,	.	.	.	.	1,442,570
Post-Office,	.	.	.	.	103,501
Tobacco,	.	.	.	.	63,048
Mint Receipts,	.	.	.	.	60,518
Stamps,	.	.	.	.	328,300
Judicial Fees and Fines,	.	.	.	.	70,469
Layer and Akbarew,	.	.	.	.	764,759
Marine and Pilotage,	.	.	.	.	45,974
Calcutta Excise,	.	.	.	.	19,106
					£18,477,586

—*Parl. Papers, May 1834*; and MARTIN, ix. 113.

Note G, p. 375.

Hindustan, from the Himalaya mountains to Cape Comorin, contains 512,873 square miles; including the protected states, 1,128,000. The population of the former is 93,000,000, being at the rate of about 190 to the square mile. This, under the tropical sun, and with the rich alluvial soil of a large part of India, capable, in general, of bearing two crops in the year, must be considered a very scanty population. France contains 32,000,000 of inhabitants, and 156,000 square miles—or 214 to the square mile; England, 13,500,000, and 38,500 square miles—or 330 to the square mile; Flanders, 3,762,000, and 7400 square miles—or 507 to the square mile. Even in Bengal, the garden of Hindostan, out of 202,650 square miles, only 89,250 are actually under cultivation. The produce of the soil there varies from forty to a hundred fold; on an average about sixty fold, at least four times that of the richest portion of Europe—which would, of course, maintain four times the number of persons on a square mile that can find subsistence in these northern climates.—MOREAU, *Statist. de la Grande Bretagne*, ii. 107–112; MALTE BRUN, vi. 84; and *Stat. Journal*, i. 195. In the Madras presidency, the population is only 107 to the square mile; in the Bombay, 114; in Singapore and Malacca, 92; in Ceylon, 50; over the whole of India, 144: which is hardly as much as a fourth of the population under the climate and soil of Europe.—MOREAU, ii. 113.

END OF VOLUME X.

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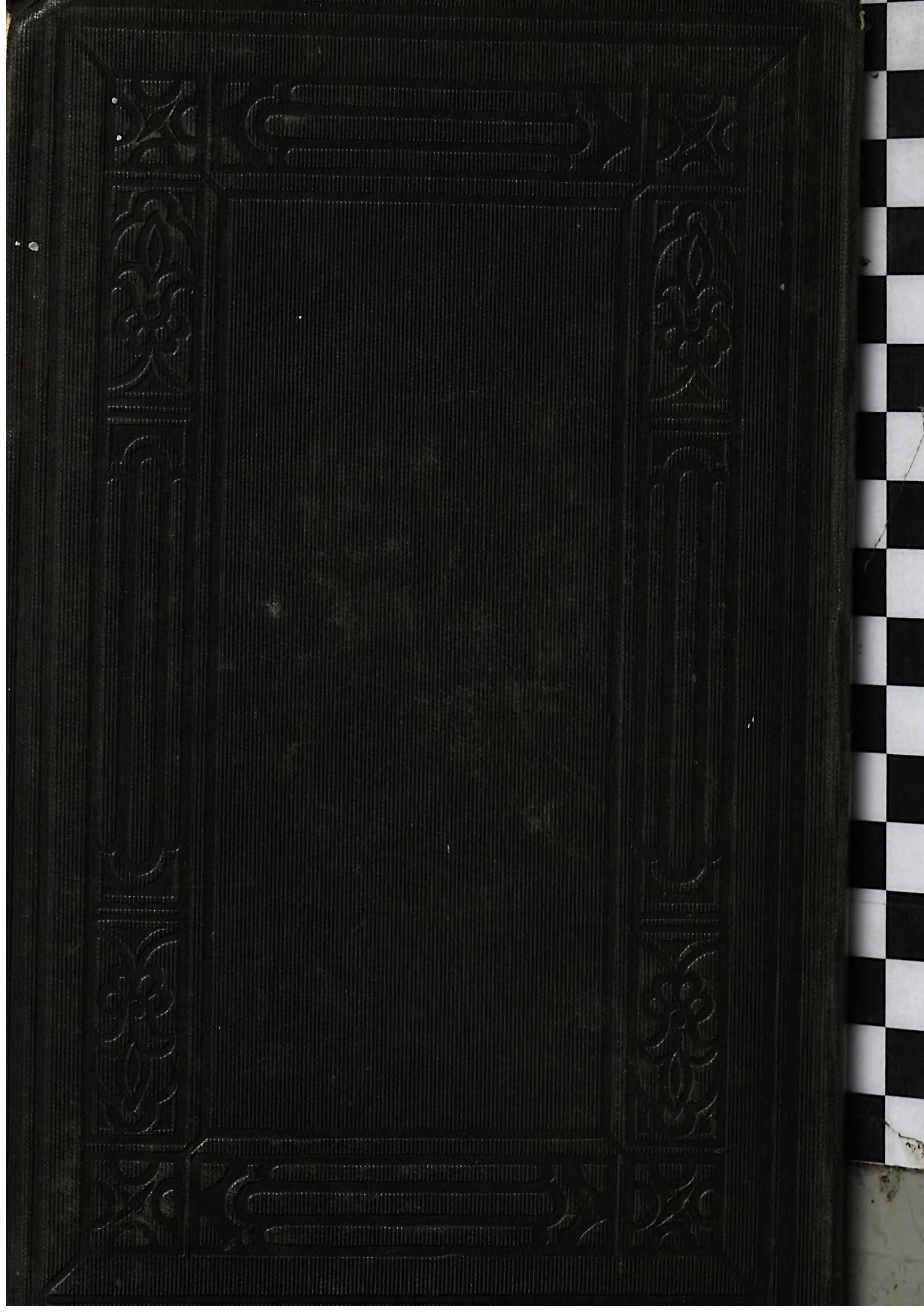
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